

Authentic Vietnam Tour - 18 days

(Hanoi – Halong – Pu Luong – Ninh Binh – Dong Hoi – Phong Nha – Hue – Hoian – Saigon – Mekong)

Note*: this tour can be operated from Saigon. If you would like to start the tour from Saigon, please contact us for detailed itinerary.

Itinerary Overview

Day	Destination	Meals
Day 1	HANOI ARRIVAL	--
Day 2	HANOI CITY TOUR	B
Day 3	HANOI – HALONG BAY	B/L/D
Day 4	HALONG – HANOI	B/L
Day 5	HANOI – PU LUONG	B/L/D
Day 6	PU LUONG – NINH BINH	B/L
Day 7	NINH BINH – CYCLING – TRANG AN GROTTO – PHONG NHA	B/L
Day 8	DONG HOI – PHONG NHA CAVES	B/L/D
Day 9	PHONG NHA CAVES – DARK CAVES – HUE	B/L
Day 10	HUE CITY TOUR	B/L
Day 11	HUE – DANANG SCENIC TRAIN JOURNEY	B
Day 12	DANANG – GOLDEN HAND BRIDGE – HOIAN	B/L
Day 13	HOIAN – COUNTRYSIDE & CYCLING TOUR	B/L
Day 14	HOIAN – FREE DAY	B
Day 15	HOIAN – SAIGON CITY TOUR	B
Day 16	SAIGON – MEKONG RIVER CRUISE	B/L/D
Day 17	MEKONG – SAIGON	B/L
Day 18	SAIGON DEPARTURE	B

Note*: B: Breakfast / L: Lunch / D: Dinner

Travel Map



Detailed Itinerary

Day 1 HANOI ARRIVAL

Arrive in Hanoi. Greeted by your driver at the airport. Transfer to your hotel in the city centre for check-in and at leisure in the rest of the day.

Note*:

- The hotel room will be available at 2:00pm, and in case that you would like to secure an early-check in, an additional charge will be applied.
- Please be advised that both international and domestic might be crowded at sometimes during the day, so in case that you arrive and cannot find our representatives, please contact us, so we could easily search for you.

Meals: N/A

Accommodation: Hotel in Hanoi

Day 2 HANOI CITY TOUR

Free to relax in the morning.

Pickup at 13:30. We will spend a half day to visit the city. We start with visit to President Ho Chi Minh's mausoleum (Outside). We also visit the famous One Pillar Pagoda nearby.

Leaving the President's complex, we continue to visit the Temple of Literature (Van Mieu). Although several Van Mieu can be found throughout Vietnam, the most prominent and famous is that situated in the city of Hanoi, and was functioned as Vietnam's first university.

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation: Hotel in Hanoi

Day 3 HANOI – HALONG BAY – NIGHT ON BOARD

08h00: Pick up from your hotel in Hanoi. Drive to Halong City through the paddy fields in the Red River Delta.

10h00: Stopover on the way for a refreshment break

12h00: Arrive at Tuan Chau wharf – Break and photography time

12h30: Board the Cruise for departure. Welcome drink will be served

13h00: Lunch is served while cruising through the bay

15h30: Visit exciting Cua Van fishing village. The village is free of busy roads and streets, electric lights, houses and high rise buildings. Instead, there are only herds of little boats and rafts. You will have the chance to discover the traditional culture and customs of the fishermen.

16h30: Enjoy kayaking or swimming (if the weather permits).

17h00: Back on board and continue cruising.

19h00: Dinner is served.

21h00: Take some leisure time to enjoy chatting at the bar or enjoy some night fishing.

Note*: the itinerary and activities on board would vary depending on the boat you choose.

Meals: Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner

Accommodation: Halong bay cruise

Day 4 HALONG – HANOI

06:00: Start with a short early Tai Chi class.

07:00: Coffee and tea will be served

08.00: Continue cruising
08h15: Visit splendid Sung Sot Cave
09h00: Check out and enjoy a fantastic cruise on the bay, passing Dinh Huong Island, fishing villages, Ga Choi Island, Dog Island and Sail Island.
09.30: Buffet brunch (breakfast/lunch) while cruising back through Halong Bay to the pier
11h30: Arrive at the pier. Time to say goodbye to the crew. Pickup and transfer to Hanoi.

Overnight at the hotel in Hanoi.

Meals: Breakfast/Lunch

Accommodation: Hotel in Hanoi

Day 5 HANOI – PU LUONG

07:00: Pick-up at the hotel to go to Pu Luong Nature Reserve by Limousine Bus.
09:00: Short break in Luong Son (Outside of Hanoi).
11:00: Stop at the local market of the Muong Ethnic Minority; enjoy the beautiful scenery of ThungKhe Pass (One of the 10 most beautiful passes in Vietnam).
12:00: Arrival in Mai Chau and transfer to a van to go to Pu Luong Reserve nature.
13:00: Check in and lunch at Pu Luong Eco Garden – The Mountain Retreat.
14:30: Board the van to the starting point. Following the small road through the terrace rice and sugar cane fields, cross the Hanging Bridges to visit other remote rural villages of Thai Ethnic. Stop at the giant waterwheels, ducks farm to learn about the agriculture before getting on the Bamboo Raft for a relaxing cruise on Cham stream (cruise depending on weather conditions).
17:30: Pick up the van to go to the Eco Garden – Mountain Retreat. Enjoy swimming in the Infinity Pool.
19:00: BBQ Dinner at the lodge, enjoy some local rice wine. Have a quiet night in the middle of the Reserve.

Meals: Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner

Accommodation: Homestay in Pu Luong

Day 6 PU LUONG – NINH BINH

07:30: Have breakfast in the lodge. Enjoying the breathtaking view from Pu Luong Eco Garden.
08:30 = Trek following the small roads through the terrace rice fields and cross the stream to visit remote hidden village of Kho Muong to learn about the local people in Pu Luong.(6kms) Explore Doi Cave (Bat cave), this is the largest cave in Pu Luong. (Depending on the weather condition)
12:00: Back to the Eco Garden – The Mountain Retreat, check out.

13:00: Have lunch and have free time to relax in the Infinity pool or walking around the village before boarding the car to go to Ninh Binh at 14:30.

17:30: Arrive in Ninh Binh homestay, check in and have free time.

19:00: Have dinner at the homestay.

Meals: Breakfast/Lunch

Accommodation: Homestay in Ninh Binh

Day 7

NINH BINH – CYCLING – TRANG AN GROTTO – PHONG NHA

7:30: Breakfast at the homestay

8:30: Cycling through the limestone karsts to reach 2 temples of the first 2 Emperors in the 10th Century in Hoa Lu Ancient Capital hike up the Ma Yen Mountain to visit the King's tomb in 10th century and enjoy the panorama view from the mountain. On the way back, stop in a local family to discover daily life and culture and share a tea with them.

12:00: have lunch at the homestay

13:30: Go to Trang An for a boat ride in between the karst pics and enjoy the beautiful scenery and peaceful atmosphere.

16:00: Drop you off at the hotel. Free to relax till pickup for overnight train to Dong Hoi

Meals: Breakfast/Lunch

Accommodation: Overnight train

Day 8

DONG HOI – PHONG NHA CAVES

Our driver and Guide will pick you up at Dong Hoi Train station. Transfer to the restaurant for breakfast.

Then we drive on to the Ho Chi Minh-West Trail. There will be a short stop at the 8 Ladies Cave. This is a memorial temple for 8 brave woman that sought shelter inside one of the caves during the war. Our tour guides will explain the entire story to the participants!

Visit Paradise Cave. Named as Heaven in Mother Earth's Underground, Paradise Cave is one of the most magnificent and magical wonders in the world. The British Royal Caves Research Association has recognized it as the longest dry cave in Asia. Especially, the stalactite system here are so beautifully glitzy and shimmering that beyond human's imagination

Continue the journey to visit the Mooc Spring Eco Trail. The Mooc Spring Eco-Trail is home to many exotic animals like Gibbons, colorful birds, snakes, many fresh water fish and butterflies. Enjoy the

great moments of relaxation, mix the natural scenery of the romantic Mooc stream.

Meals: Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner

Accommodation: Homestay in Phong Nha

Day 9

PHONG NHA CAVES – DARK CAVES – HUE

Have breakfast at the hotel and check-out.

Visit Phong Nha Cave. The only way to enter the cave is by a short 30 minute boat ride on the Son river. Every tour to Phong Nha Cave starts at the boat station at the Phong Nha Ke-Bang Tourism Center. The mouth of the cave is simply beautiful and unlike any other cave entrance in the world.

Conquering the Phong Nha Cave is the longest wet cave or river cave in the world, enjoy the scenery spectacular limestone, underground river system and unique stalactite in the world.

Continue the journey to visit the Chay River – Dark Cave.

The entrance of the Dark Cave is at the opposite river bank from the Zip-Line tower. The beautiful deep blue color of the Chay river will catch your eye while riding the Zip-Line and a short 20 meter swim is required to actually enter the cave after the ride.

The cave is home to many lakes, with a water temperature of about 18 degrees. Inside the cave there are many unique things to see and experience! There is a natural mud bath at the end of one of the narrow passages and there are many ancient fossils to be found. The fossils are over a million years old!

Our guides will provide information about the history of the cave while exploring it. After successfully exploring the cave it's time to take the kayak and paddle back to the boat station. Pickup and drive to the train station to transfer to Hue Transfer to the hotel in Hue upon arrival.

Note: we would have to arrange bus transfer to Hue in case there is not suitable train today.

Meals: Breakfast/Lunch

Accommodation: Hotel in Hue

Day 10

HUE CITY TOUR

08:00: Pickup at the hotel. Today, we will spend a full day touring Hue city.

In the morning: visit Old Imperial City, Flag Tower, Thien Mu Pagoda and Dong Ba bustling market. Lunch at the local restaurant.

In the afternoon: visit Royal Tombs of Minh Mang and Khai Dinh. We will also visit a Conical hat village and incense stick village.

Then enjoy free time to explore Hue city.

Meals: Breakfast/Lunch

Accommodation: Hotel in Hue

Day 11 HUE – DANANG SCENIC TRAIN JOURNEY

Free to relax in the morning.

In the afternoon, pickup to transfer to the station for scenic train journey to Danang. The train journey take you through Hai Van pass – one of world’s most amazing train routes.

Arrive Danang in the late afternoon, pickup and transfer to the hotel in Danang. Enjoy free time to relax at the hotel at beautiful My Khe beach.

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation: Hotel in Danang

Day 12 DANANG – GOLDEN HAND BRIDGE – HOIAN

Free for relaxing and swimming till pickup at the hotel at 10am for Golden hand bridge. We advise a late start to beat the crowds that flock to the Golden Hand Bridge and Ba Na Hills. The adventure begins by taking the most modern Cable Car in Southeast Asia – and the world’s longest – to the top of mountains. On arrival explore Le Jardin D’Amour (consisting of 9 gardens) and the Linh Ung Pagoda. Enjoy walking on the Golden Bridge which nestles in the forested hills supported by two giant concrete hands that materialize through the trees. The Golden Bridge is 148.6 m long, with 8 spans, the largest span being 21.2 m. The bridge sits 1414 m above sea level.

After lunch, discover and play games at the Fantasy Park – a perfect tourist attraction for an entire family as well as to explore King Peak. Return to the Cable Car Station and back to the Gateway then transfer to the hotel in Hoian. Arrive the hotel in late afternoon.

Meals: Breakfast/Lunch

Accommodation: Hotel in Hoian

Day 13

HOIAN – COUNTRYSIDE & CYCLING TOUR

Pickup at the hotel. Transfer to pointed place for cycling tour.

Today, you will spend a day leisurely cycling through the scenic countryside of Vietnam, far from the traffic the motor scooters, and the noises the city. You will cross the islands on the Song Thu river delta using local transportation, including ferries and floating bridge.

This tour will take you to discover how wooden river boats are made, learn the secret of weaving the colorful straw “Hoi An” sleeping mats Try the renowned Vietnamese basket boats and much more. You will spend the day with first-hand contact with one of the rural inhabitant of the region, far from the usual tourist circuits.

At lunchtime you will be invited into the home of a local Vietnamese family for a traditional Vietnamese meal, and learn their customs and traditions. After you have relaxed for a while under the shade of a mango tree, you will begin your return towards Hoi An by boat, which will take about 35 minutes. Arrive Hoian ancient town at about 3pm. Free to explore Hoian or manage yourself to get back to the hotel.

Meals: Breakfast/Lunch

Accommodation: Hotel in Hoian

Day 14

HOIAN – FREE DAY

Free and easy day to explore Hoian town or swim at nearby beach.

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation: Hotel in Hoian

Day 15

HOIAN – SAIGON CITY TOUR

Free to explore Hoian town till airport transfer for the flight to Saigon.

Upon arrival, pickup for half day city tour. Our city tour will help you to see the best of Saigon. We visit the historic Reunification palace and War Remnants Museum, followed by the architectural treats of French colonial Notre Dame Cathedral and the post Office.

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation: Hotel in Saigon

Day 16

SAIGON – MEKONG RIVER CRUISE

Note*: depending on the cruise availability, you would do the Caibe – Can Tho or Can Tho – Caibe itinerary. We will keep you updated.

07:10 – 07:30: Pickup at the hotel for Cantho – Caibe itinerary

08:00 – 08:20: Pickup at the hotel for Caibe – Can Tho Itinerary.

You board your comfortable wooden Mekong Eyes cruise vessel around noon. After a refreshing welcome drink we show you our on-board facilities and your cosy cabin. As lunch is served, the Mekong Eyes Cruise starts cruising. Sit back and watch the fantastic scenery and the daily life of the Mekong people.

In the afternoon you can disembark for a guided leisurely stroll through a village and the surrounding fruit orchards or rice fields. Meet the friendly locals and taste the local produce and fruits.

Get back on board and enjoy a drink at the bar or relax on deck as the sun sets over the magnificent water landscape of the Mekong river. The Mekong Eyes Cruise will anchor for the night. The day ends with a delicious on-board dinner. You stay overnight on board your floating hotel in the Mekong Delta.

Meals: Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner

Accommodation: Mekong Eyes/Le Cochinchine Cruise

Day 17

MEKONG – SAIGON

Wake up well rested to the sound of the river and get ready for another exciting day of sightseeing in the Mekong Delta. At 6.30h the Mekong Eyes cruise vessel sets off for a sunrise cruise. Watch the locals go about their daily work drying exotic fruits and building ships on the wooden yards while enjoying an early breakfast.

After breakfast, we will board a sampan boat to Cai Be or Cai Rang floating market, the region's busiest and most lively markets. Marvel at the sheer abundance of exotic fruits, vegetables and skilfully handcrafted regional products. We will pull up to the boats for talking and bargaining with the merchants. We will also visit some of the local candy and cake making factories or boat through the green water landscape to see local houses, verdant orchards and ship-building yards.

Note*: The floating markets in the Mekong Delta are no tourist markets but wholesale markets where produce of the Mekong Delta like fruits and vegetables are traded. For this reason the number of boats on the market fluctuates depending on harvesting seasons and market demand. Furthermore, modern wholesale markets are becoming more popular in Vietnam. This can result in decreasing numbers of boats being present on the markets.

Meals: Breakfast/Lunch

Accommodation: Hotel in Saigon

Day 18 SAIGON DEPARTURE

Free and easy till airport transfer for departure flight. Trip ends.

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation: N/A

Inclusions & Exclusions

Inclusions:

- Overnights in selected hotels or similar
- Halong bay 2 day Cruise package
- Mekong 2 day cruise package by Mekong Eyes/Le Cochinchine Cruise
- All in-tour stationed local English speaking guide.
- Entrance fees for sightseeing mentioned in the itinerary
- Excursions as mentioned in the itinerary
- Transfers as mentioned by air-conditioned vehicles (including airport pick up & see off)
- Meals as indicated in the itinerary
- Internal flight (Danang – Saigon)
- Overnight trains (Ninh Binh – Dong Hoi)
- Day Trains: Dong Hoi – Hue; Hue – Danang

Exclusions:

- Meals and services other than those noted in the itinerary
- Visa stamping fee
- International flights pre/post tour
- Laundry, telephone calls, and personal expenditures
- Gratuities for guides, drivers, porters, boat crew, and personal, non-itinerary services

Payment and Terms

Payment

- To guarantee your land tour booking, a deposit 30% must be paid in advance. The balance must be settled **either** in USD Cash on arrival **or** 1 week before arrival date via any other methods.
- We accept payments in cash, by credit card or by bank transfer and Western Union. Any charges to settle the payment must be paid by the Clients. We will recognize the amount receive only.

Cancellations

Cancellations for all or any part of the trip will not be effective until received in writing. Should you have to cancel, the following terms will apply:

- 65 days or more before departure: 15% of total tour cost
- Between 64 and 35 days before departure: 30% of total tour cost
- Between 34 and 15 days before departure: 50% of total tour cost
- Between 14 and 7 days before departure: 80% of total tour cost
- 6 days or less before departure / No Show: 100% of total tour cost

Note: We strongly recommend for your protection that you purchase a trip cancellation insurance.

Important Information

Emergency Contact

Should you need to contact us during a situation of dire need, it is best to first call the travel consultant whom you deal with and then our hot line contacts. If for any reason you do not receive an immediate answer, please send us a detailed message and contact information by email to the agent and to info@indochinatreks.com, we may check and return your call and assist you as soon as possible.

Our all travel consultants use WhatApps. Please ensure that you have the contact number. It's best to buy a local sim-card upon arrival. Most hotels offer free wifi. So it's very easy to contact in urgent case.

Emergency contact numbers

Mr. Kelvin Do: +84 986759655

Ms. Thuy Pham: +84 984654964

Combo Trip

If you book small group tour option, please note that the tour combines with our other tours. As such, some travel companions on your tour may have previously been travelling together with us. Likewise, some travel companions may be continuing together on another tour after your trip concludes.

You can start the tour on any date (please contact our consultant in advance to avoid peak dates or holidays) and customize itinerary with extra days/activities at any destination.

Internal Flights

For all internal flights, we would use Vietnamairlines, Vietjesair, Jestar, Cambodia Angkorair or Laos Airlines. Most domestic flights in Laos, Cambodia and Myanmar, airlines would use small 70 seat ATR72 for short distances. Most airlines in Vietnam use the Airbus A321. 20kg for checkin luggage and 7kg for hand-bag is included in the price.

International flights before/after the tour must be booked by yourself before travelling date.

Accommodation

We would use different hotel categories and you can select any basing on your budget. So your travel companions would not stay at your hotel. A Hotel Voucher will be provided once your tour is confirmed with all hotel details.

Packing List

Conservative Dress

- Modest clothing that covers knees and shoulders (Long pants, long skirts, shirts that cover shoulders)
- Shawl or scarf (for temple visits)

Note*: Please pack clothing for the season in which you will be travelling. From Dec-Feb weather can be cold, so please pack warm clothing. From May-Nov it is the wet season, so please bring waterproof clothing.

Documents

- All tickets (required)
- Passport (required) (With photocopies)
- Required visas
- Hotel & Tour Vouchers
- Meeting sign (with your names and flight details that we will use for transfers)

Train Travel

Train travel in Vietnam is very basic and train cleanliness is often not a priority for train staff. Sleeper trains normally have 4 seats per compartment, which convert into sleeping bunks (two upper and two lower). A sheet, pillow and blanket are provided, although many people prefer to bring their own sleeping sheet. At times, passengers of different genders may be required to share a sleeper train berth and/or share a compartment with people not travelling in your group. For short distance - 3 hours (as Hue to Danang or vv), you will do the trip on soft/hard seat carriage.

Simple food is available on the train but many people like to stock up on freshly baked bread, cheese and fruit prior to departure. Water should also be bought before the journey.

Train journeys in Vietnam are an experience and allow you to get a real taste of Vietnam.

Airport transfers

All airport transfers are included in the tour price. You should provide us your arrival/departure flight details and we will arrange things basing on the information. A meeting sign with your name and all flight details will be sent to you. Please be ready at the lobby at pointed time for pickup.

Driver/guide should always be present at the airport before your arrival time. If you could not find the driver, please contact your travel consultant who you deal with. For any reason that airport transfer could not be arranged, please take the taxi to the hotel. We will refund the money then.

Travel insurance

Travel insurance is not included in our tour price. When travelling with us, you are suggested to buy insurance that covers all medical coverage, cancellation, personal liability, curtailment and loss of luggage and personal effects.

Trip Specific Safety

We strongly recommend the use of a neck wallet or money belt while travelling, for the safe keeping of your passport, air tickets, travellers' cheques, cash and other valuable items. Leave your valuable jewellery at home - you won't need it while travelling. Many of the hotels we use have safety deposit boxes which is the most secure way of storing your valuables. A lock is recommended for securing your luggage.

Be aware that petty theft can be an issue in some towns and cities especially late at night. A common tactic is opportunists on motorbikes that drive by and snatch bags. Please always leave valuables and passports etc in your hotel in safety boxes if available and only carry with you enough cash to spend for the day. Bags should always be carried over the neck and not left to sit on your shoulder.

Warming

Please do not buy gems unless you know what you are doing. Even if genuine you should not expect to be able to sell them at home. If you fall victim to a gem scam, we are unable to assist you.

Visas and Entry Requirements

Please note that visas for Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos are the responsibility of the individual traveller. The visa requirements for your trip vary depending on where you are from and where you are going. For the most up to date information please check your Governments Foreign Ministry website or with you travel agent as rules do change.

CAMBODIA - Visas can be obtained at the Cambodian border or Siem Reap Airport for approx. \$35 USD very easily. Please have **at least** 2 passport photos with you as well.

VIETNAM - As of March 2017, a select 80 nationalities are now eligible to enter Vietnam with an E-Visa. Please contact your Foreign Ministry or Vietnamese consulate to see if your nationality is eligible. Please note that you should **ONLY** apply for a Vietnam E-Visa if you are entering Vietnam by international

airport - either Noi Bai International Airport (Hanoi) or Tan Son Nhat International Airport (Ho Chi Minh City).

If you are entering Vietnam by land border, please apply for a regular visa for Vietnam. Many of the land borders we travel through do not accept the Vietnam E-Visa. Please view this link to apply E-Visa: <https://evisa.xuatnhapcanh.gov.vn/web/guest/trang-chu-ttdt>

LAOS - Visas are issued upon arrival in Laos. You will need two passport size photographs and approx \$35. Tourists are generally admitted to Laos for 15 days with a visa on arrival or for 30 days with a visa issued at a Lao embassy. Please bring visa photos with you.

Please be aware that you will require four clean pages (minimum) in your passport and at least six months validity.

Tipping

It is customary in Asia to tip service providers such as waiters, at approximately 10%, depending on the service. Tipping is expected - though not compulsory - and shows an expression of satisfaction with the people who have assisted you on your tour. Although it may not be customary to you, it is of considerable significance to the people who will take care of you during your travels. There are several times during the trip where there is opportunity to tip the local guides or drivers we use. Recommendations for tipping drivers and local guides would range from \$3-\$5 USD per person per day depending on the quality and length of the service.

Electricity

Indochina Countries use 220V, and a mixture of flat 2-pin, round 2-pin or 3 pin plugs. It is recommended to bring a universal plug adapter.