



12-Day Vietnam 'Heritage & Culture' Select Tour

Start: Ho Chi Minh City / **Finish:** Hanoi
Duration: 12 days/11 nights

Venture off the beaten track in **Vietnam** on a tour packed full of adventure, mind blowing scenery, local culture and history. Travel stress-free with accommodation, activities and transport all included, with a local Tour Leader to guide the way. From the bustling Ho Chi Minh City and an idyllic remote fishing village to the lantern-lined streets of Hoi An and the iconic Halong Bay, this tour has it all!



Departure Dates:

- 27 November 2024
- 18 December 2024
- 01 & 15 January 2025
- 12 & 26 February 2025
- 12 & 26 March 2025
- 09 & 23 April 2025
- 07 May 2025

Included Accommodation:

- 8 nights 4-star twin share accommodation
- 2 overnight sleeper trains (quad share)
- 1 Halong Bay Overnight Boat with twin share cabin

Meals: 11 breakfasts, 1 lunch, 2 dinners

Activities & Entry Fees:

- Cu Chi Tunnels Tour
- My Lai Memorial entry fee, near Hoi An
- Motorbike tour, Hue
- Halong Bay overnight boat trip

Day 1: Arrive in Ho Chi Minh City

Your adventure kicks off in the vibrant Ho Chi Minh City. If you arrive early in the day, feel free to spend time exploring the narrow streets on foot or find a restaurant teeming with locals for your first taste of the best Vietnamese cuisine. At 6pm you'll meet your Tour Leader at our hotel for a Welcome Night introduction. We'll cover how Stray works and answer any questions you have about travelling in Vietnam. Afterwards, make the most of your first night by getting to know each other over a delicious Vietnamese dinner and a few cold beverages.

Accommodation included: Alagon Saigon Hotel & Spa or similar

Meals included: Welcome dinner

Activity included: Welcome Night meeting with Stray Tour Leader and group

Day 2: Ho Chi Minh City

This morning we'll take a trip out to the famous Cu Chi Tunnels, a complex of over 200kms of tunnels used by the VietCong in the war against the US. Discover how the people lived and survived in these tunnels, built schools and hospitals underground and eventually gained victory.

In the afternoon we're free to explore the hot and lively Ho Chi Minh City. Visit the War Remnant Museum and learn about the history of the American and Vietnam War, go to the French Colonial Saigon Opera House, browse the surrounding shopping plazas or see a cultural show. Ho Chi Minh even has its own Notre Dame Cathedral, which is said to be a connection between the physical and spiritual life for the Ho Chi Minh people.

This evening, we'll head to the train station and board an overnight sleeper train to Dieu Tri. The trains are equipped with comfy beds and charging ports and there's even a shopping trolley of

goodies brought round before you turn in. You'll awake in the morning and drive 45 minutes to Bai Xep, our destination for the next two nights.

Accommodation included: Quad share overnight sleeper train

Meals included: Breakfast

Included activities: Tour of Cu Chi Tunnels

Day 3: Arrive Bai Xep

We'll arrive in Bai Xep nice and early and then you're free to enjoy this remote coastal location and all it has to offer. Relax on the beach, get to know the friendly locals or just relax at your comfortable seaside guesthouse.

Accommodation included: Casa Marina Resort or similar

Meals included: Breakfast

Optional Paid Activities: Hike to a waterfall, go swimming or snorkelling, relax on the beach or feast on all-you-can-eat BBQ and beer.

Day 4: Bai Xep

You have a full free day to spend in Bai Xep today. Swim, snorkel and go for a long walk along the beach, learn to paddle a traditional round boat, wander the village or spend time at the guesthouse bar. In the evening, sit by the beach with a cocktail and let that warm seabreeze wash over you - this is what it's all about.

Accommodation included: Casa Marina Resort or similar

Meals included: Breakfast

Optional Paid Activities: Hike to a waterfall, go swimming or snorkelling, relax on the beach or feast on all-you-can-eat BBQ and beer.

Day 5: Bai Xep to Hoi An

A scenic coastal drive takes us to the UNESCO World Heritage town of Hoi An today. We'll make a stop along the way to visit the My Lai Memorial, a site that commemorates a catastrophic event that happened during the American War. We'll stroll through the remnants of the village and visit the small museum, before continuing on to Hoi An. A must-see destination, with beautifully restored and preserved French Colonial architecture, Hoi An is bursting with funky bars, outstanding restaurants, art galleries, souvenir shops and countless tailor shops. With glorious beaches nearby, local nightlife and delicious delicacies on offer, you'll feel like you're in paradise!

Accommodation included: La Siesta Hoi An or similar

Meals included: Breakfast

Activity included: My Lai Memorial

Day 6: Hoi An

Take time today to explore this charming town's many offerings, go to a cooking class and learn how to cook authentic Vietnamese cuisine or visit a tailor to get a custom outfit created. When the sun goes down, Hoi An really turns on its charm. Paper and fabric lanterns are lit throughout the streets,

bathing the riverside town in a warm glow. Take a sunset stroll through the old town and try a local delicacy called the 'White Rose' - a dumpling stuffed with shrimp or pork bunched into the shape of a rose. Apparently, the recipe is a family secret, held by only one family who supply all the restaurants around town.

Accommodation included: La Siesta Hoi An or similar

Meals included: Breakfast

Optional paid activities: Tailoring, bicycle tours, scuba diving, cooking classes, sunrise or sunset cruise, countryside tours, motorbike tours, fishing trips.

Day 7: Hoi An

You have another free day to explore Hoi An today. If you've seen everything you wanted to in town, we recommend renting bicycles and riding to the beach where you'll find a variety of bars from the Aussie owned Salt and Pub Restaurant to the Bungalow Beach bar which serves up taco specials and frosty craft beers. If you'd like something more upmarket, there are lots of superb restaurants along the beach as well, the Tamarind Tree (Hai Cay Me) is arguably the best restaurant in the area and the Purple Lantern makes the best Cao Lau noodles you'll ever eat!

Accommodation included: La Siesta Hoi An or similar

Meals included: Breakfast

Optional paid activities: Rent bicycles, tailoring, bicycle tours, scuba diving, cooking classes, sunrise or sunset cruise, countryside tours, motorbike tours, fishing trips.

Day 8: Hoi An to Hue

Today we'll travel to Hue along the stunning coastal road where we'll have views of the South China Sea before snaking our way up the steep hills of the incredible Hai Van Pass surrounded by lush tropical jungle before driving on to Hue, where we'll arrive in time for an early lunch.

This afternoon we'll take a motorbike tour of Hue and the surrounding countryside. Hue is regarded as the cultural and spiritual centre of Vietnam and is the former home to the Vietnamese emperors. We'll see many elaborately decorated temples and beautiful pagodas, including the seven-storied Thien Mu Pagoda (where the most famous Vietnamese monk is buried), the intricate Citadel and Forbidden Purple City. We'll discover a little bit of the 'real' Vietnam with our local motorbike guides, riding through quaint villages and lush rice paddies, we'll see the historic and picturesque Japanese covered bridge, have a go at making incense sticks and learn about the rice growing process at the Rice Museum.

Accommodation included: Senna Hotel or similar

Meals included: Breakfast

Activity included: Motorbike tour

Day 9: Hue to Hanoi

Today you have some time to explore Hue. Wander along the banks of the Perfume River, sample the local cuisine or opt for a relaxing massage. In the afternoon we'll make our way to the train station for our overnight train to Hanoi.

Accommodation included: Quad share overnight sleeper train

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 10: Hanoi to Halong Bay

We'll arrive in Hanoi very early and make our way straight to the iconic Halong Bay where we'll board a boat at approximately 11am. Halong Bay is a UNESCO World Heritage Site known for its emerald waters and towering limestone islands topped by rainforests. On your cruise, you'll enjoy a delicious lunch and dinner prepared by your crew and in the evening, you can relax on deck with a drink as you look at the millions of stars glistening above you.

Accommodation included: Orchid Trendy Overnight Cruise

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Included Activities: Halong Bay cruise in a twin share cabin

Day 11: Halong Bay to Hanoi

This morning you'll enjoy breakfast and more incredible views on the boat before arriving back in Hanoi around lunch time. We'll check into our hotel and then we have the afternoon free to explore Vietnam's capital city. Wander through the old quarter, go and see a water puppet show, explore the fascinating French quarter or simply go for a delicious egg coffee at a riverside cafe. Tonight we'll go for our final group dinner and say a heartfelt goodbye to our travel mates.

Accommodation included: La Siesta Hanoi or similar

Meals included: Brunch

Day 12: Departure Day

Have breakfast in Hanoi this morning before departing for your next destination. If you're not ready to go home just yet, why not book a trekking tour to SaPa in Vietnam's mountainous north, or ask your guide about our tours in Cambodia.

Meals included: Breakfast

Optional paid activities: Trekking in SaPa

This itinerary is a guide. Given the spontaneous nature of our trips and lack of control over Southeast Asia's weather(!), what we do each day might occasionally vary.