

Highlights of Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos

17 days

- **Itinerary Overview**
- **Includes & Excludes**
- **Detailed Itinerary**

I. Itinerary Overview

Day	Destination
Day 1	HANOI ARRIVAL – FOODIE TOUR
Day 2	HANOI CITY TOUR
Day 3	HANOI - HALONG BAY
Day 4	HALONG BAY - HANOI - FIGHT TO DANANG
Day 5	HOIAN - MY SON TOWERS TOUR
Day 6	HOIAN - FREE AND EASY DAY
Day 7	HOIAN - HUE SCENIC TRAIN JOURNEY
Day 8	HUE CITY TOUR - FLIGHT TO SAIGON
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Day 10	SAIGON - PANORAMA MEKONG RIVER CRUISE
Day 11	CAIBE/CAI RANG FLOATING MARKET – SAIGON
Day 12	SAIGON – SIEM REAP
Day 13	SIEM REAP - ANGKOR TOUR
Day 14	SIEM REAP - LUANG PRABANG
Day 15	LUANG PRABANG - HERITAGE - KUANG XI WATERFALL TOUR
Day 16	PAK OU CAVES - RIVER TRIP AND ELEPHANT RIDING
Day 17	LUANG PRABANG - DEPARTURE

II. Includes & Excludes

Inclusion:

- Overnights in selected hotels or similar
- Vietnam visa approval letter
- Local English speaking guides
- Excursions as mentioned in the itinerary
- Meals as indicated in the itinerary
- Entrance fees for sightseeing mentioned in the itinerary
- Tours and transfers as mentioned, by air-conditioned vehicles
- Halong bay 2 day Cruise package
- Mekong 2 day Cruise package
- 1 day train for Danang – Hue
- 4 flights (Hanoi - Danang, Hue – Saigon, Saigon – Siem Reap, Siem Reap – Luang Prabang)

Exclusion:

- Meals and services other than those noted in the itinerary
- Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos Visa stamping fees
- Laundry, telephone calls, and personal expenditures
- Gratuities for guides, drivers, porters, boat crew, and personal, non-itinerary services

III. Detailed Itinerary

Day 1

HANOI ARRIVAL – FOODIE TOUR

Arrive in Hanoi. Greeted by your guide/driver at the airport. Transfer to your hotel in the city centre for check-in.

Hanoi Foodie Tour by Night - from 6pm to 9pm

Your expert English-speaking local guide will give you an insight into the intricacies and traditions of Vietnamese food culture including details on ingredients and historical backgrounds of popular northern dishes. We eat as we go, trying seasonal fruits and sampling a tasty French-inspired snack from a street cart.

Walking through the maze of bustling streets that make up Hanoi's Old Quarter, we tempt our tastebuds with the famed Hanoi dish Banh Cuon at a local eatery. Watch in awe as the skilled chefs demonstrate for you how this tasty dish is put together. Continuing into the atmospheric heart of the Old Quarter, we wander past street stalls and quiet residential lanes where you can observe local life that has changed little since Hanoi was founded over 1000 years ago.

Our next two snack stops are at outdoor barbeque stalls. We sit down with the Hanoi locals and sample various meat, vegetable and bread specialties that are flame grilled over hot coals for extra flavour. It's then time for dessert as we venture down a small alley to join in the local tradition of feasting on fresh

fruit served in a cup and smothered with crushed iced and condensed milk – this speciality is one not to be missed!

Your local guide will then take you to one of Hanoi's best kept secrets, a hidden street food restaurant to taste top ten street foods in Hanoi is Banh My Hanoi, Vietnamese Rice Wine and famous Egg Coffee. This hard-to-find café is one of the few left in the narrow street inside the old quarter of Hanoi. Or, if coffee is not your style, a cold beer awaits!. At the end of the trip you are free to continue exploring the area or your guide will assist you back to your hotel.

Meals: Dinner

Accommodation: Hotel in Hanoi

Day 2 HANOI CITY TOUR

Today, we will spend a full day to visit the city. We start with visit to President Ho Chi Minh's mausoleum and residence. 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

After lunch in a local restaurant, we go to the Museum of Ethnology, which is an excellent museum containing the ethnic costumes of the various minorities of Vietnam, as well as relics, tools and even full size replicas of their homes and buildings.

Meals: Breakfast/Lunch

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.

Meals: Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner

Accommodation: Sleep on board

Day 4 HALONG BAY - HANOI - FIGHT TO DANANG

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.

12.00: Return from Halong to Hanoi. Arrive Hanoi at about 17pm.

Airport transfer for late flight to Danang. Transfer to the hotel in Hoian upon arrival.

Meals: Breakfast/Lunch

Accommodation: Hotel in Hoian

Day 5 HOIAN - MY SON TOWERS TOUR

Pickup at the hotel at 7:50 am, we drive to visit My Son. The My Son temple complex is regarded one of the foremost Hindu temple complexes in Southeast Asia and is the foremost heritage site of this nature in Vietnam. It is often compared with other historical temple complexes in Southeast Asia, such as Borobodur of Java in Indonesia, Angkor Wat of Cambodia, Bagan of Myanmar and Ayutthaya of Thailand. Although badly damaged by bombing raids in the 1960s, the site still has more than 20 structures and was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1999.

Leaving My Son for boat station and taking a boat trip on Thu Bon river. You could visit the living of the local people and feeling the fresh air. You will have soft lunch on the boat and see the beautiful views along the river. Arrive Hoian in early afternoon. Free time to explore Hoian ancient town.

Meals: Breakfast/Lunch

Accommodation: Hotel in Hoian

Day 6 HOIAN - FREE AND EASY DAY

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

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation: Hotel in Hoian

Day 7 HOIAN - HUE SCENIC TRAIN JOURNEY

Free in the morning.

In the afternoon, transfer to the station for day train to Hue. Enjoy scenic view of Hai Van Pass on the

way. Arrive Hue in late afternoon. Transfer to the hotel and enjoy free time.

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation: Hotel in Hue

Day 8

HUE CITY TOUR - FLIGHT TO SAIGON

08:00: Pickup at the hotel.

Today, we will spend a full day touring Hue city. Our visiting sites includes Old Imperial City, Flag Tower, Thien Mu Pagoda, Royal Tombs of Tu Duc and Khai Dinh. The tour ends with your self exploration of Dong Ba bustling market then transfer to the airport for the late afternoon flight to Saigon.

Transfer to the hotel in Saigon upon arrival.

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation: Hotel in Hoian

Day 9

SAIGON CITY + CU CHI TUNNELS TOUR

Pickup at the hotel at 7:40, we head out of town to visit the Cu Chi Tunnels, which is an extensive underground network of approximately 200 kilometers of tunnels dug initially by the Viet Minh and then expanded by the Viet Cong. Here contains hospitals, plus accommodation and schools, and were used extensively for refuge and storage and also utilized as a military base for the Viet Cong close to Saigon. In late afternoon, transfer to Saigon 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. Free time at leisure or shopping at Ben Thanh Market nearby.

Airport transfer for late flight to Danang. Transfer to the hotel in Hoian upon arrival.

Meals: Breakfast/Lunch

Accommodation: Hotel in Saigon

Day 10

SAIGON - PANORAMA MEKONG RIVER CRUISE

Pickup at the hotel in Saigon to Can Tho or Cai Be. 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: Sleep on board

Day 11

CAIBE/CAI RANG FLOATING MARKET - 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

Accommodation: Hotel in Saigon

Day 12

SAIGON - SIEM REAP

Free and easy for shopping and personal activities in Saigon.

In the afternoon, take the flight to Siem Reap. Arrive Siem Reap by afternoon flight, Siem Reap – Treasures of the Kingdom of Cambodia, special welcome all warmly to everybody, a moment of courtesy meeting then self-introduce with our Cambodian tour guide in the meeting point's Siem Riep airport.

We continue to visit the fabulous Ta Prohm embraced by the roots of enormous fig trees and gigantic creepers, Ta Keo. Thommanon, small, attractive temple in very good condition, built at the same time as Angkor Wat, Chaosay Tevoda. Prasat Kravan - with its unique brick sculptures, Srah Srang - The Royal Baths" was once used for ritual bathing), Banteay Kdei (surrounded by four concentric walls).

Having dinner with dance Apsaras show at local restaurant & overnight in Siem Reap

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation: Hotel in Siem Reap

Day 13

SIEM REAP – ANGKOR TOUR

08:00 We drive to South Gate of Angkor Thom, the famous Bayon temple – a unique for its 54 towers

decorated with over 200 smiling faces of Avolokitesvara, Baphoun, the Terrace of Temple, Elephants and Terrace of the Leper King.

15:00 The tour start with the visiting to the famous temple: Angkor Wat. Angkor Wat is a World Heritage Site since 1992, famous for its beauty and splendor. Angkor Wat features the longest continuous bas-relief in the world, which runs along the outer gallery walls and narrates stories from Hindu mythology. After that, visit Bakheng Temple and enjoy a romantic sun set view form Bakheng hill.

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation: Hotel in Siem Reap

Day 14 SIEM REAP – LUANG PRABANG

Free and easy to explore Siem Reap till airport transfer for afternoon flight to Luang Prabang. Free.

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation: Hotel in Luang Prabang

Day 15 LUANG PRABANG - HERITAGE - KUANG XI WATERFALL TOUR

The first half of the day is spent visiting the museum at the former Royal Palace Museum which was built between 1904 & 1905, during the French colonial times as a residence for King Sisavangvong. This fascinating museum features the original royal chambers, paintings depicting traditional Lao life, a throne room, and four of the old royal cars, including an Easel.

We then continue to the monasteries of Wat Xieng Thong which was built by King Sayasettha back in 1565. It is also known as the most beautiful temple in Luang Prabang.

The next stop is Wat Visoun temple which was built by King Visounnarath 500 years ago in 1513! After enjoying lunch we head to Ock Pop Tok weaving center - a Lao fair trade textile enterprise.

The next stop is the incredibly scenic Kuang Xi Waterfall which is surrounded with turquoise blue pools and an ideal place for swimming!

You will pass by the Free the Bears Center, a rescue center for endangered Asiatic black bears. If available, chat with the centers Program Manager and learn about the pan-Asian organization which provides a home for black bears res-cued from poachers and traffickers

Back in Luang Prabang we will visit Wat Phousi to enjoy the rewarding view of the city.

Meals: Breakfast/Lunch

Accommodation: Hotel in Luang Prabang

Day 16 PAK OU CAVES - RIVER TRIP AND ELEPHANT RIDING

Pickup at the hotel for transfer to the boat pier. We board the boat and begin our cruise along the amazing Mekong which takes us past idyllic scenes of rural riverside life and spectacular scenery until reaching the beautiful Pak Ou Caves which sit amongst the limestone cliffs where the Mekong and Nam

Ou rivers meet. The caves are split in two, one named Tham Ting and the other Tham Theung. They are both filled with thousands of Buddha images and statues which have been deposited here over centuries.

Pak Ou remains a popular pilgrimage site for Lao people, especially during the Lao New Year in April when the caves become crowded with pilgrims who gain merit by ceremonially washing the Buddha statues. We take time to explore upper and lower caves before stopping for a delicious Lao lunch at a nearby restaurant.

After lunch, we take a short walk to the elephant camp where you will enjoy an exciting elephant riding, approximately an hour ride around the camp and also bathing in the Mekong River. After this activity, we enjoy boating back to Luang Prabang.

Meals: Breakfast/Lunch

Accommodation: Hotel in Luang Prabang

Day 17

LUANG PRABANG - DEPARTURE

Free and easy to explore Siem Reap till airport transfer for departure flight. Trip ends.

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation: N/A