
Best of the North

7 days

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

I. Itinerary Overview

Day	Destination
Day 1	HANOI ARRIVAL
Day 2	HANOI CITY TOUR - NIGHT TRAIN TO SAPA
Day 3	Y LINH HO - LAO CHAI - TA VAN VILLAGES TREKKING
Day 4	CAT CAT - SIN CHAI VILLAGES TREKKING - BUS TO HANOI
Day 5	HANOI - HALONG BAY - NIGHT ON BOARD
Day 6	HALONG BAY - HANOI, NIGHT STREET FOOD!
Day 7	HANOI 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
- Hanoi – Lao Cai (for Sapa) by overnight train (Deluxe 4 Berth with AC)
- Sapa – Hanoi by Limousine Bus

Exclusion:

- Meals and services other than those noted in the itinerary

- Visa stamping fees
- Laundry, telephone calls, and personal expenditures
- Gratuities for guides, drivers, porters, boat crew

III. Detailed Itinerary

Day 1 HANOI ARRIVAL

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

Meals: N/A

Accommodation: Hotel in Hanoi

Day 2 HANOI CITY TOUR – OVERNIGHT TRAIN TO SAPA

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. Back to the hotel. Free for personal activities till transfer to the station for overnight train to Sapa.

Note*: late checkout is not included.

Meals: Breakfast/Lunch

Accommodation: Overnight train to Sapa.

Day 3 Y LINH HO - LAO CHAI - TA VAN VILLAGES TREKKING

Sa Pa is a quiet mountain town and home to a great diversity of ethnic minority peoples. Most of the ethnic minority people work their land on sloping terraces since the vast majority of the land is mountainous. Their staple foods are rice and corn. Rice, by its very nature of being a labour intensive crop, makes the daily fight for survival paramount. The unique climate in Sapa has a major influence on the ethnic minorities who live in the area. With sub-tropical summers, temperate winters and 160 days of mist annually, the influence on agricultural yields and health related issues are significant.

Today, upon arrival at Lao Cai Station in the early morning, we will transfer straight to Sapa. Here we have breakfast at the local restaurant and rest for few minutes before starting 6km of walking down to the south east of Sapa along the side of Muong Hoa valley to Y Linh Ho village of the Black H'mong. A 2

km-trekking down to Lao Chai village, through terraced rice fields to Ta Van village of the Dzay minority people. On the way, we would have chance to learn about the local agriculture producing customs and daily lifestyle. We have lunch at a local family, offering you a worth chance to learn about the local house architecture, which is full of their daily life styles and exclusive custom. We will then get back to Sapa by jeep or motorbike.

Meals: Breakfast/Lunch

Accommodation: Hotel in Sapa

Day 4

CAT CAT - SIN CHAI VILLAGES TREKKING - BUS TO HANOI

We start a walk down to the South-west of Sapa (around 4 km) to visit Cat Cat village of the Black H'mong. Relax at the food of the stunning waterfall and the vestige of a hydroelectric power station that was constructed by the French during the colonial time in Vietnam. We enjoy picnic lunch by the side of the river, and trek for 6 km to Sin Chai village, which is located at the foot of Fansipan Mountain, "the roof of Vietnam and Indochina". From here you can enjoy huge stunning landscapes before climbing up on the way back to Sapa. You are free to explore the town till bus transfer to Hanoi departing at 3:00pm. Arrive Hanoi at 9pm.

Meals: Breakfast/Lunch

Accommodation: Hotel in Hanoi

Day 5

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 6

HALONG BAY - HANOI – FOODIE TOUR

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. Free for Refreshment.

18:00 - 21:00: Hanoi by Night - Street food tour

We start our excellent street food walking tour at your hotel in old quarter of Hanoi along the perimeter of the market, dozens of street hawkers sell a staggering variety of produce from live seafood to exotic fruits and spices. 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 with directions or a taxi back to your hotel.

Meals: Breakfast/Lunch

Accommodation: Hotel in Hoian

Day 7

HANOI DEPARTURE

Today, you are free till airport transfer for departure flight. Trip ends!

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation: N/A