

Tran-Vietnam Train Journey

18 days

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

I. Itinerary Overview

Day	Destination
Day 1	HANOI BY NIGHT STREET FOOD TOUR
Day 2	HANOI - CITY TOUR - OVERNIGHT TRAIN TO SAPA (9 HOURS)
Day 3	Y LINH HO - LAO CHAI - TA VAN VILLAGES TREKKING
Day 4	TA VAN - GIANG TA CHAI - SU PAN - BAN HO
Day 5	BAN HO - NAM TOONG - SAPA - HANOI BUS (5 HOURS)
Day 6	HANOI - HALONG BAY - NIGHT ON BOARD
Day 7	HALONG BAY - HANOI - HUE OVERNIGHT TRAIN JOURNEY (12 HOURS)
Day 8	HUE CITY TOUR
Day 9	HUE - HOIAN SCENIC TRAIN JOURNEY (3 HOURS)
Day 10	HOIAN - MY SON TOWERS
Day 11	HOIAN - FREE DAY
Day 12	HOIAN - NHA TRANG DAY TRAIN JOURNEY (10 HOURS)
Day 13	NHA TRANG - FREE DAY
Day 14	NHA TRANG - SAIGON DAY TRAIN JOURNEY (8 HOURS)
Day 15	SAIGON - CU CHI - CITY TOUR
Day 16	SAIGON - MEKONG WITH HOMESTAY
Day 17	MEKONG - SAIGON
Day 18	SAIGON - DEPARTURE

II. Includes & Excludes

Inclusion:

- Overnights in selected hotels or similar
- Vietnam visa approval letter
- Halong bay 2 day Cruise package
- 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 (bus and group tour)
- 5 Train Jourey: Hanoi - Sapa, Hanoi - Hue, Hue - Hoian, Hoian - Nha Trang, Nha Trang - Saigon

Exclusion:

- Meals and services other than those noted in the itinerary
- Visas 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 BY NIGHT STREET FOOD TOUR

Pickup at the airport upon arrival. Free to relax at your hotel till late afternoon for street food tour.

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: Dinner

Accommodation: Hotel in Hanoi

Day 2 HANOI - CITY TOUR - OVERNIGHT TRAIN TO SAPA (9 HOURS)

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 till transfer to the station for overnight train to Sapa.

Meals: Breakfast/Lunch

Accommodation: Overnight Train to Sapa

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

Pickup at the station, transfer to Sapa. Breakfast before starting 12 km of trekking, visit Y Linh ho, Lao Chai and Ta Van villages of the H'mong and the Dzay minorities. After lunch at a local family in Ta Van, we keep on hiking around the village of the Dzay & H'mong where we stay overnight in a local family for you to get to know their daily life of the local people: work, custom, embroideries, clothes.

Meals: Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner

Accommodation: Homestay at Dzay Local House

Day 4 TA VAN - GIANG TA CHAI - SU PAN - BAN HO

After pancake made by your host family, we continue to discover Giang Ta Chai village, then Su Pan villages of the red Dzao minority. After picnic lunch, we keep on hiking to Ban Ho, the village lies within a beautiful valley, home to the Tay minority people who have their traditional house on stilts and we

will spend the night here.

Meals: Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner

Accommodation: Homestay at Tay Family

Day 5

BAN HO - NAM TOONG - SAPA - HANOI BUS (5 HOURS)

2km walking to a very nice waterfall discovered and named "the Lavie" by the French during the colonial time in Vietnam. Enjoy swimming then go up to the mountain to visit a small hamlet of the Red Dzao people called Nam Toong, then get back to Ban Ho before get to Sapa by Car. Shower before bus ride back to Hanoi. Arrive Hanoi in in the evening.

Meals: Breakfast/Lunch

Accommodation: Hotel in Hanoi

Day 6

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: Night on Board

Day 7

HALONG BAY - HANOI - HUE OVERNIGHT TRAIN JOURNEY

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. Shower at small hotel before transferring to the station for overnight train to Hue.

Meals: Breakfast/Lunch

Accommodation: Overnight on train to Hue

Day 8 HUE CITY TOUR

Arrive Hue at 10am.

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 free for personal activities in Hue.

Meals: Lunch

Accommodation: Hotel in Hue

Day 9 HUE - HOIAN SCENIC TRAIN JOURNEY (3 HOURS)

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 Hoian

Day 10 HOIAN - MY SON TOWERS

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

Accommodation: N/A

Day 11 HOIAN - FREE DAY

Free and easy day for shopping and swimming in Hoian

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation: Hotel in Hoian

Day 12 HOIAN - NHA TRANG DAY TRAIN JOURNEY (10 HOURS)

Today, we take day train from Hoian to Nha Trang to enjoy the scenic scenery on the way. Arrive Nha Trang in late afternoon. Pickup and transfer to the hotel.

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation: Hotel in Nha Trang

Day 13 NHA TRANG - FREE DAY

Free and easy day for shopping and swimming at beautiful beach in Nha Trang.

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation: Hotel in Nha Trang

Day 14 NHA TRANG - SAIGON DAY TRAIN JOURNEY (8 HOURS)

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: N/A

Day 15 SAIGON - CU CHI - CITY 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.

Meals: Breakfast/Lunch

Accommodation: Hotel in Saigon

Day 16

SAIGON - MEKONG WITH HOMESTAY

6.30 AM: Depart for Cai Be by car/van via Trung Luong Express Highway, stopping to take photos in Tan An town overlooking the picturesque flat rice fields.

9.30 AM: On arrival in Cai Be, set off by motor boat to visit the Cai Be floating market and watch the locals trading fruit and many other commodities on board their vessels. Visit a small family business to see how coconut candy and crispy rice popcorn are made. Then wander into the small villages to visit the orchard and fruit plantation, accompanied by traditional southern Vietnamese folk music.

11.30 AM: Keep cruising to a series of small canals to experience the charms of the Upper Mekong Delta. Arrive in Tan Phong island, join to a cooking class. Enjoy your cooking experience and learn how to prepare special Vietnamese dishes. Food cooked by yourself and fresh river food served in the heart of the garden. Relax on the hammocks to get back your energy.

14.00 PM: Cycle around the village path with fruit orchards and bonsai garden. Meet the local islanders to learn more about the local daily life in the Mekong delta.

15.00 PM: Meet our local guide and transfer to the island for the overnight homestay experience with the local people. After meeting your home stay hosts, you're free to walk around the house and village to explore the countryside. You will prepare your own dinner (Vietnamese dishes) with help from your host. Overnight homestay with your hospitable island hosts.

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation: Night at homestay in Caibe

Day 17

MEKONG - SAIGON

After breakfast, you will be visiting Mr Ba Duc's ancient house. It's one of several houses preserved in harmonious combination of two architectural styles: Vietnamese and French, whose shape is unique to the colonial period.

Today, you will also visit a rice husking mill to learn about the procedure for rice production. Mekong Delta is popular for its own unique charm. In Cai Be, a lot of materials are still hand-crafted, such as: "Cham La", the coconut leaves used to weave the roofs of homes. If you want to see how bricks are made, you'll see it here. After lunch at a restaurant serving local cuisine, you will taking back to HCMC by Van/Bus. Trip ends in Hochiminh city around 4:30 PM.

Meals: Breakfast/Lunch

Accommodation: Hotel in Saigon

Day 18

SAIGON - DEPARTURE

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

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation: N/A