

BEST OF VIETNAM & CAMBODIA



USA | HANOI | HALONG | HANOI | DANANG | HOI AN | DANANG | SAIGON | SIEM REAP | USA

TOUR DAYS: 12 DAYS

**SMALL GROUP
(MAXIMUM 22)**

DEPARTURE:

19

Mar, 2019

TOUR SUUMMARY:

This tour begins in the country's capital Hanoi, before heading to Halong Bay to sail on board a Junk and marvel at breathtaking views of the Bay. The tour then travels to the center of the country to visit the UNESCO heritage towns of Hoi An. Guests can wander through the cobbled streets of Hoi An and enjoy its ancient buildings before flying to the bustling southern city of Saigon. In Saigon guests will have a fully guided city tour and visit the nearby villages dotted along the Mekong River. The tour continues with a flight to Siem Reap/Cambodia, where guests will visit the breathtaking Temples of Angkor Watt in one of the most important archaeological sites of Southeast Asia.

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS:

- Admire the scenery and dramatic rock formations as you sail on a traditional boat in Halong Bay
- Spend time in the beautifully preserved UNESCO heritage town of Hoi An
- Admire the colonial splendor and experience the lively atmosphere of dynamic Hanoi
- Visit Temples of Angkor in Siem Reap
- Tour the historic city of Saigon and the nearby villages

TOUR PRICES: CHICAGO

Per person on twin sharing basis:

USD 2799

Single Supplement:

USD 575

TOUR LODGING INFO:

9 Nights' Accommodation + 02 Nights onboard flight

Accommodation will be provided on twin sharing basis, on hotels listed below or similar

CITIES	NIGHTS	HOTELS
Hanoi	02 Nights	Mercure Hanoi La Gare Hotel
Halong Bay	01 Night	Phoenix Cruise
Hoi An	02 Nights	Belle Maison Hadana Resort & Spa
Saigon	02 Nights	Harmony Saigon Hotel & Spa
Siem Reap	02 Nights	Tara Angkor Hotel

TOUR ITINERARY:

DAY 01 - 02: USA - HANOI

Make your way to your gateway airport to board your flight to Vietnam. Enjoy in-flight meals and services. Overnight onboard the flight.

DAY 03: HANOI ARRIVAL

Although it is the modern-day capital of Vietnam, Hanoi still retains the mystery and charm of past centuries. Narrow lanes and traditional shop houses invite exploration, while its many beautiful public spaces; lakes, parks, tree-lined boulevards and monuments; give the city an air of elegance and harmony with nature unique among Asian capitals. On arrival at Hanoi International Airport you will be met and transferred to your hotel for check in. Overnight in Hanoi

DAY 04: HANOI (B)

Begin your day with a one hour cyclo ride to explore the capital city. The city is a blend of long established traditions and modern imprints of Western colonization. Tree-lined boulevards and colonial buildings give the city a touch of Western elegance, while crowded blocks of tiny old houses and narrow lanes bear the charm of past centuries. Afterwards visit the vast Ho Chi Minh Memorial Complex, a lovely park setting home to Ho Chi Minh's final resting place, as well as a museum and other memorials.

Visit the Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum (closed on Mondays & Fridays) where one can pay respects to the embalmed body of Ho Chi Minh. Continue through the park to Ho Chi Minh's Stilt House, the simple two-room dwelling where Ho Chi Minh lived from 1958 until his final days in 1969. Preserved in the same condition as during his life, it may be viewed through windows only. Visit the miniature One Pillar Pagoda dating from the 11th century but rebuilt after being destroyed by the French in 1954. Today it stands near the vast Ho Chi Minh Memorial Complex, a lovely park setting which is home to Ho Chi Minh's final resting place, as well as a museum and other memorials. Then visit the Temple of Literature, a peaceful series of walled courtyards and graceful gateways, and one of the best examples of traditional Vietnamese architecture. Founded in 1070 and dedicated to Confucius, this was also the site of Vietnam's first university. Afterwards visit Hoan Kiem Lake which means "Lake of the Returned", which is a lake in the historical centre of the capital of Hanoi. The lake serves as a focal point for locals. Legend has it that King Le Loi handed a magic sword called Heaven's Will which brought him victory in his revolt against the Chinese Ming dynasty back to the Golden Turtle God in the lake. The Tortoise Tower (Thap Rua) standing on

TOUR PACKAGE INCLUDES:

- International flight from Chicago inclusive of applicable taxes
- 9 Nights accommodation at listed hotels or similar
- Daily breakfast
- 2 Days onboard Phoenix Cruise in Halong Bay
- 2 Dinners and 1 Lunch as specified in the itinerary
- Airport transfers
- Transportation as per the itinerary
- Sightseeing & entrance fees
- Tours with a local English speaking guide
- Internal Airfare
- All taxes

a small island near the centre of lake is linked to the legend. Then visit Ngoc Son Temple and the Rising Sun Bridge. The temple was erected in the 18th century. It honours the 13th century military leader Tran Hung Dao who distinguished himself in the fight against the Yuan (Mongol invaders), Van Xuong, a scholar and Nguyen Van Sieu, a Confucian master and famous writer in charge of repairs made to the temple in 1864. Jade Island is connected to the shore by the wooden red-painted Huc Bridge (The Huc, means Morning Sunlight Bridge). Visit the Neo-Gothic St. Joseph's Cathedral inaugurated in 1886. Visiting this cathedral is like being instantly transported to medieval Europe. The cathedral is noteworthy for its square towers, elaborate altar and stained-glass windows. The first Catholic mission in Hanoi was founded in 1679. Visit Tran Quoc Pagoda, one of the oldest pagodas in Vietnam, located on West Lake. The pagoda is quite beautiful and done in a traditional Vietnamese style. An 11 floor Buddhist tower makes this pagoda a sacred spot for pilgrims from all over the country. Then visit the Museum of Fine Arts (Bao Tang My Thuat); housed in a colonial building the museum displays traditional Vietnamese fine arts, ranging from sculpture and painting to lacquerware and ceramics. Afterwards visit Hoa Lo Prison Museum more famously known by American prisoner of war as the Hanoi Hilton. Overnight in Hanoi

Optional: Water Puppet Show: USD 25 Per person (Min of 2 pax)

Take in the engaging and colorful spectacle of a traditional water puppet show on this tour. You will be able to experience authentic Vietnamese tradition with a water puppet show. Get a humorous insight into local culture, customs and folklore as you watch the puppets. The show is performed in a pool using the water surface as the stage. It is a unique look into rural Vietnamese life, folklore and an important part of the Vietnamese culture.

DAY 05: HANOI - HALONG (B/L/D)

If you wish to see how the locals rise and shine in the morning, wake up early and join an exciting scene of hundreds of locals, passionately attentive in their morning exercises of Tai Chi Quan, jogging, martial arts, classical dance and so on.

After breakfast, we depart for Halong Bay, a Natural World Heritage as designated by UNESCO since 1994. En-route you will pass by the Red River Delta with many rural villages, fascinating towns, and paddy fields. On arrival at Halong Bay Tuan Chau International Marina, a tender boat will take you Halong Phoenix Cruise. A refreshing welcome drink is served followed by check-in into your cabin. Enjoy lunch. A delicious set

menu lunch is served in the restaurant while you can enjoy the amazing scenery. Cruise amongst the hundreds of islands. You will pass by a several islands and islets on the Bay. This afternoon, stop at Luon cave for Kayaking to visit the small cave and beautiful lagoons. Kayaking provides the opportunity to explore the beautiful lagoons and get closer to the island. (A bamboo boat will be arranged for people who cannot Kayak). The boat will take you to Titop Island for you to enjoy the beach. You can enjoy a swim, or climb up to the top to get an overview of a corner of the bay. As the sun sets over the bay, we head back to our cruise. Relax with Coffee, tea and fruits on the sundeck or order your favorite drink while your boat cruise to the night's anchorage area. Dinner will be server with local seafood. After dinner you may choose to spend time on the top deck or experience squid fishing before retiring to your cabin.

DAY 06: HALONG - HANOI - DANANG - HOI AN (Flight) (B)

Enjoy the morning view of the beautiful landscape with a cup of coffee or tea. You will visit the impressive Cave of Halong Bay – Surprising Cave (Sừng Sốt) with your tour guide, a truly awesome and amazing cave to experience. As the boat begins cruising back to the harbor, experience more views of Halong Bay such as Fighting Cocks Island (Symbol of Halong Bay), Incense Burner and Stone Dogs Islands. A cooking demonstration onboard shows you how to make authentic Vietnamese Spring rolls. You will learn about the recipes and techniques that create this popular dish of Vietnamese people. Lunch is served on board during cruising towards the harbor. After disembarkation, You will then be transferred back to Hanoi to catch a flight to Danang where you will be met and transferred to Hoi an. The exquisitely preserved merchant town of HOI AN was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1999. Its colorful shop houses and temples reflect a diverse heritage, dating back to the 16th and 17th century, when it was a major port for Western, Chinese and Japanese traders. Today it is a thriving center of traditional crafts and a shopper's paradise, best explored on foot. Overnight in Hoi An

DAY 07: HOI AN (B)

Wander through the cobbled streets, past low tile-roofed buildings, the bustling central MARKET and the small HARBOUR where colorfully painted boats are moored. The walking tour will include visits to a PRIVATE HOUSE, where members of the same family have lived continuously for centuries in a traditional setting; to one of the FAMILY CHAPELS built by prominent merchant or official families as centers for ancestor worship; and to a typical CHINESE-STYLE PAGODA. Continue on to SA HUYNH MUSEUM located near the Japanese Covered Bridge with exhibitions from the earliest period of Hoi An's history. Visit handicraft workshops in Hoi An where local products are being made. Finally, continue to the famous JAPANESE COVERED BRIDGE PAGODA, first constructed in 1593 by the Japanese community of Hoi An to link the town with the Chinese quarters across the stream. Overnight in Hoi An

Optional: Boat Trip on the Thu Bon River & Organic Village with Lunch: USD 75 Per person (Minimum of 2 guests)

Board a boat that will take you on the Thu Bon River to visit the Kim Bong wood carving village and afterwards enjoy an excursion to Tra Que vegetable village, located on a quiet and peaceful stream. Tra Que village is famed throughout Vietnam for the quality and variety of its vegetables and herbs, grown using a special method of organic farming. Tour the gardens with a local farmer, with explanations of the different plants. Join the farmers in preparing the land and fertilizing it with algae from the local lake. Continue getting to know the local way of life by

helping with activities such as raking the ground, sowing seeds, watering greens, picking vegetables and many more gardening activities. Return the farmer's house and learn how to prepare special dishes with the local family. After lunch, return to Hoi An by bus.

DAY 08: HOI AN - DANANG - SAIGON (Flight) (B)

This morning travel back to Danang to the domestic airport for a flight to Saigon. On arrival you will be met and enjoy a tour of the vibrant metropolis. SAIGON teems with energy, activity and motion. Everywhere you look, you see the meeting of traditional and modern life. The emerging modern skyline stands cheek by jowl with colonial buildings and traditional temples. Outside on the streets, young professionals zip by on motorcycles, chatting on cell phones; inside the quiet temple courtyards, worshippers pray amidst clouds of incense. Begin your tour of this exciting city with a tour of the historic center, strolling along DONG KHOI STREET, formerly known as the Rue Catinat, the main shopping thoroughfare and heart of old colonial Saigon. Pass by classic European-style landmarks such as the ornate CITY HALL (HOTEL DE VILLE), the old OPERA HOUSE (both may only be viewed from the outside), and pay a quick visit to the neo-Romanesque NOTRE DAME CATHEDRAL and the CENTRAL POST OFFICE. Afterwards dive into modern history with a tour of the REUNIFICATION PALACE. Formerly the Independence Palace of the South Vietnamese president, this 60s style building was famously stormed by tanks on April 30, 1975 signifying the fall of South Vietnam. It has been preserved in its original state, and the original tanks remain on display near the entrance gates. End the tour at the central BEN THANH MARKET, where vendors display a vast array of goods and handicrafts. Overnight in Saigon

DAY 09: SAIGON (B)

Enjoy your day at leisure; no services provided. Overnight in Saigon

Optional: Full Day Tour to Cu Chi Tunnels and Tay Ninh: USD 85 per person (min of 2pax)

From Saigon, drive to the CU CHI TUNNELS. Never discovered by American forces, these tunnels were an important Vietcong base during the American War. Stretching over 200 km, this incredible underground network, dug by hand out of hard laterite, connected command posts, hospitals, shelter and weapon factories. Today, walk through the area and learn about the day-to-day life of the VC, see the cleverly disguised entrances and elaborate booby-traps, and even venture inside the tunnels, some of which have been modified to accommodate tourists. Afterward, go to TAY NINH, the birthplace of the unique CAO DAI religion, a fusion of Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, Christianity, Islam and native Vietnamese spiritual beliefs. Every day at noon, worshipers garbed in colourful robes flock to the CAO DAI GREAT TEMPLE to participate in the daily prayer sessions, which visitors may respectfully observe from the upper balconies (Note: shortly before and during the annual TET festival (Vietnamese New Year) the daily ceremony of the priests in Tay Ninh may be cancelled without prior notice). Return to Saigon.

Optional: Full Day Tour to Cai Be Floating Market and Vinh Long: USD110 per person (min of 2pax)

From Saigon, drive into the heart of the Mekong Delta to Cai Be, and embark on one of the local boats to explore CAI BE FLOATING MARKET, a lively market of fruit and vegetable barges with a picturesque Catholic cathedral on the riverside. Continue along smaller waterways and canals, stopping at the MEKONG RIVER ISLANDS to visit orchards and local cottage industries. Enjoy watching how the delta residents make traditional treats such as dried longyans, rice pancakes and puffed rice

candies, with the chance to sample the local delicacies. Disembark at Vinh Long and return to Saigon.

Optional: Bonsai Dinner Cruise: USD 75 Per person (Min of 2 pax)

Escape the bustle of the city and cruise the waters of the Saigon river on a traditional wooden barge. During dining on an extensive selection of Asian and Western cuisine, enjoy a mix of live western jazz, classical and traditional Vietnamese music as well as a dance performance.

DAY 10: SAIGON - SIEM REAP (Flight) (B)

This morning you will be transferred to Ho Chi Minh International Airport for a flight to Siem Reap, Cambodia. On arrival at Siem Reap International Airport you will be met and transferred to your hotel. Overnight in Siem Reap.

DAY 11: SIEM REAP (B/D)

The crowning jewel of Khmer architecture, ANGKOR WAT is the national symbol and the highlight of any visit to Cambodia. The largest, best preserved, and most religiously significant of the Angkor temples, Angkor impresses visitors both by its sheer scale and beautifully proportioned layout, as well as the delicate artistry of its carvings. To approach the temple, first cross the vast moat, continuing along a broad causeway lined with naga balustrades. As you enter the main building, ascend through a series of galleries and courtyard before reaching the

EXTRA SERVICES:

Extra night in Siem Reap
on Twin Sharing basis:

USD 120 Per person

*Above rate is inclusive of breakfast,
Transfers from hotel to airport

central sanctuary, which offers beautiful views back over the causeway and across the surrounding countryside. On the way stop to enjoy the intricate stonecarvings that adorn nearly every surface, with some 1,700 Apsaras, or celestial dancers, sculpted into the walls. Along the outer gallery walls run the longest continuous bas-relief in the world, which narrates stories from Hindu mythology, including the famous Churning of the Ocean of Milk. Then visit the fortified city of ANGKOR THOM covering an area of 10 square km. Enclosed by a wall and wide moats the city includes many of Angkor's most popular sights. Enter by the monumental SOUTH GATE over a causeway lined on either side by statues of demons and gods, each carrying a giant naga. Continue to the TERRACE OF THE ELEPHANTS and the TERRACE OF THE LEPER KINGS, former spaces for public ceremonies, both adorned with dramatic bas reliefs. Visit the ruined BAPHUON, ROYAL ENCLOSURE and PHIMEANAKAS before continuing to the mysterious BAYON TEMPLE. In this temple, one of the most popular and compelling in Angkor, explore the galleries of beautifully preserved bas reliefs and ascend narrow stairs to reach the central sanctuary, where you will find giant stone faces smiling enigmatically down at you from every angle. This evening enjoy a farewell group dinner. Overnight in Siem Reap

DAY 12: SIEM REAP - USA (B)

Today you will be transferred back to the airport for your flight back home.

END OF OUR SERVICES

**OPTIONAL TOURS COMBO PACKAGE:
BOOK 3 OPTIONAL TOURS
PACKAGE AND SAVE 10%!**

PACKAGE COST:

USD 166 Per person

Above rate Includes:

- 1) Water Puppet Show
- 2) Boat Trip on the Thu Bon River & Organic Village with Lunch
- 3) Full Day Tour to Cu Chi Tunnels and Tay Ninh

*Above discounted package price is only available at booking time. For optional tours booked at a later date the individual pricing mentioned in the itinerary will be applicable

