

Sample Itinerary: Vietnam

Hanoi * Tam Coc * Halong Bay * Danang * Hoi An * Ho Chi Minh City * - Cu Chi Tunnels * Mekong Delta

13 nights / 14 days

Summary of itinerary:

Day 1: Welcome to Hanoi (no meal)

Day 2: Hanoi – Full Day City Tour with 1-hour Cyclo Ride & Water Puppet Show (B, L)

Day 3: Hanoi – Visit Hoa Lu and Tam Coc (B, L)

Day 4: Hanoi – Halong Bay – Cruising to Lan Ha Bay (B, L, D)

Day 5: Continue Cruising & Kayaking (B, L, D)

Day 6: Continue Cruising & Flight to Danang, Transfer to Hoi An (B, L)

Day 7: Hoi An – Guided Walking Tour & Afternoon Street Food by Bicycle (B, L, Street Foods)

Day 8: Hoi An – Free Day of Leisure (B) - [optional Farming & Fishing Life Tour – seat in coach](#)

Day 9: Hoi An – Free Morning – Afternoon Flight to Ho Chi Minh City (B)

Day 10: Ho Chi Minh City Tour – Full Day (B, L)

Day 11: Farm to Table Cooking Class – Visit Cu Chi Tunnels (B, L)

Day 12: Explore the Mekong Delta – Cai Thia – Vinh Long – Transfer to Can Tho (B, L)

Day 13: Boat Trip to Visit Cai Rang Floating Market – Return to Ho Chi Minh City (B)

Day 14: Ho Chi Minh City Departure (B)

Detailed itinerary:

Day 1: Welcome to Hanoi (no meal)

Upon arrival Noi Bai International airport in Hanoi, you will be met and transferred to your hotel in the downtown.

The capital of Vietnam, Hanoi, is a modern city that retains a unique old-world charm and some of Asia's most striking colonial architecture. The many lakes and parks give the city a relaxing atmosphere.

Overnight in Hanoi

Day 2: Hanoi – Full Day City Tour with 1-hour Cyclo Ride & Water Puppet Show (B, L)

This city tour of Hanoi takes in essential sites which will commence from your hotel lobby at 08h30. Visit the Ho Chi Minh Complex including the Mausoleum, his former stilt-house residence, the Presidential Palace and the One-Pillar Pagoda; The Temple of Literature - Vietnam's first university dating back to 1070.

After lunch at a local Vietnamese restaurant, continue visiting the Museum of Ethnology, widely acknowledged as the best in the country, containing an extensive display of life-size structures dedicated to Vietnam's 54 ethnic minority peoples; enjoy a cyclo ride for an hour touring through the narrow, chaotic streets of the Old Quarter - a must for any visitor to Hanoi! The day finishes with a traditional performance of the famous Vietnamese water puppets.

Note: From 2018, the Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum is closed all day on Monday and Fridays. Most museums close on Mondays.

Overnight Hanoi



Day 3: Hanoi – Visit Hoa Lu and Tam Coc (B, L)

After breakfast, a two-hour road trip through the picturesque countryside and agricultural land will take you to Hoa Lu. On arrival, your guide will lead you through this ancient complex which formed the capital city of Vietnam under both the Dinh and Le Dynasties between 968 and 1009 AD. King Dinh Tien Hoang chose this mountain location as the water systems fed from the mountains were perfect for both agriculture and defence. Enjoy the sight of palaces, pagodas, tombs and pavilions built by different dynasties and visit the Dinh and Le Temples, the two remaining architectures of Hoa Lu. In the afternoon, take a 2-hour sampan ride along the waterways of Tam Coc. Known locally as the 'Halong Bay of the land,' this winding river way is dotted with gorgeous limestone karsts with endless photo opportunities. You will also visit Bich Dong Pagoda comprising three pagodas located at different levels on a green mountain and the setting of the French film 'Indochine'. Return to Hanoi in the late afternoon.

Overnight Hanoi.

Day 4: Hanoi – Halong Bay – Cruising to Lan Ha Bay (B, L, D)

Breakfast following pick up between 08h15 and 08h45 by your driver/guide from your hotel in the Old Quarter.

Arrive at the Scarlet Pearl check-in area at Halong International Cruise Port, at 11h30.

Complete the check-in process and other procedures for the Scarlet Pearl Cruise

Welcome aboard! Enjoy a welcome drink during the cruise briefing, including safety instructions, before check-in to your cabin.

A splendid lunch is served at Tahiti Restaurant while cruising into the primitive Lan Ha Bay. The bay has hundreds of small and large islands, making it an enormous, wonderful scene to look at while dining.

At 15h00 transfer to a speedboat to visit Viet Hai Village on Cat Ba Island and hop on a bicycle ride (electric car also available) through a rainforest tunnel that leads to a village nestled in a valley deep in a national park. Meet, visit a traditional house, and greet local inhabitants doing their daily work, see their homes and the village school.

Guests - who choose not to visit Viet Hai Village - can try kayaking or simply swim in the clear waters on the beach near the boat. Please note, that if you choose to visit Viet Hai Village, you won't have enough time for swimming or kayaking when you return to the cruise.

Return to Scarlet Pearl Cruises to relax and admire the sunset on our sundeck.

At 17h30 enjoy a Vietnamese cooking demonstration - a great way to learn how to prepare delicious dishes. The chef will guide you on how to make famous traditional Vietnamese spring rolls and salad.

Time to enjoy your dinner and our live traditional music at 19h00

Enjoy evening views of the bay at the bar at around 21h0. Try your hand squid fishing, or chat with your friends and family on the top deck. The bars are open until late.

Overnight on Scarlet Pearl Cruise.



Day 5: Continue Cruising & Kayaking (B, L, D)

Begin your new day, between 06h00 and 06h30, with a yoga session, taking photos, or enjoy the sunrise from your cabin window.

Enjoy a light breakfast in the refreshing and peaceful beauty of the bay

Relax onboard until our luxury catamaran sailboat picks you up on style to explore some hidden parts of Lan Ha Bay such as Dau Be Island or Ba Trai Dao beach. A delightful picnic lunch will be taken with you on the sailboat to relish later.

At 12h00, enjoy your special lunch on the luxury sailboat.

Guests will have the chance to go fishing and swimming in the remote areas of the bay with the most breath-taking views. Return to Scarlet Pearl Cruise, then take some time to refresh or relax with our massage services as we cruise to the sleeping area of the bay.

Overnight on Scarlet Pearl Cruise.

Day 6: Continue Cruising & Flight to Danang, Transfer to Hoi An (B, L)

Begin your new day, between 06h00 and 06h30, with a yoga session, taking photos, or enjoy the sunrise from your cabin window.

Enjoy a light breakfast in the delighted and peaceful beauty of the bay

Visit Dark and Bright Cave, which is the perfect destination for our excursion, a serene round lake encompassed by rich trees and high stone walls. Take your pick either exploring the cave by yourself in a kayak or comfortably on local bamboo boat rowed by the locals.

Return to Scarlet Pearl Cruises, between 09h00 and 09h45. Pack your luggage and check-out of your cabin while cruising towards the port.

Enjoy an extraordinary brunch on board and then disembark at Halong International Cruise Port for the 4-hour drive straight to Cat Bi airport in Hai Phong/Noi Bai airport in Hanoi for a short flight to Danang.

Upon arrival Danang airport, met and transferred to your hotel in Hoi An.

The rest of the day free to explore on your own

Overnight Hoi An.

Day 7: Hoi An – Guided Walking Tour & Afternoon Street Food by Bicycle (B, L, Street Foods)

At 09h00 sharp, your guide will meet you at your hotel lobby to give you a proper orientation tour of the old town. Start your walking tour with a lion's share of places of interest: the 400-year old Japanese Covered Bridge; the Phuc Kien Assembly Halls; the museum and the colorful local market. Following the narrow lanes, you'll meander through tiny streets studded by houses influenced by Chinese, Japanese, French and European architectures.

Embark on a street food tour by bicycle at 15h00. If you love cycling and food, the tour is your right choice. This is a great way to see our charming city and takes you off the beaten path to get a unique glimpse into daily life of this lovely city. This easy 10 km ride is perfect mix of great food, easy exercise and sightseeing. The tour focuses street food in Hoi An. During each five hours cycling tour, you'll enjoy generous samples 9 dishes. You will be taken through real neighbourhoods to indulge in Hoi An's best street foods at places that have been making these delicacies for generations. The street food tour aims to show you how real Vietnamese people live, work and eat! Enough food is served that most participants will not need dinner after the tour. We recommend light lunch only before the tour

Overnight Hoi An.



Day 8: Hoi An – Free Day of Leisure (Optional Farming & Fishing Life Tour SIC) (B)

Breakfast at the hotel and the rest of the day free to explore or shop

Optional: Hoi An - Farming & Fishing Life [08h30-14h00] [Group Tour] – ZAR 1,355.00 per person

This day trip provides you with a close-up and intimate exposure to both the local farming and fishing communities. Accompanied by your local tour guide, you commence the day with a gentle cycling along country roads witnessing local Vietnamese rural life first hand, discovering all manner of photo opportunities - coming and visiting a beautiful organic vegetable village, watering and planting vegetable, hoeing a soil with local farmer, riding a water buffalo in a rice paddy field; seeing ducks swimming along the rice farm or farmers tending their crops. The photo opportunities are endless. You will also experience the friendliness of the local people greeting you en-route. Later you will board a boat for a river cruise to meet and engage with local fishermen and enjoy a hands-on experience of traditional net fishing. You will also experience paddling the unique Vietnamese bamboo basket boat while the waterways of coconut palm paradise. This tour provides you with a cultural window into the ways of life of both our farming and fishing communities. After a simple yet tasty lunch on the boat, return to your hotel at around 14h00. The remainder of the afternoon free Overnight Hoi An.

Day 9: Hoi An – Free Morning – afternoon Flight to Ho Chi Minh City (B)

After breakfast, morning free until you are collected and transferred to Danang airport for your flight to Ho Chi Minh city.

Upon arrival Tan Son Nhat airport in Ho Chi Minh City, you will be met and transferred to your hotel The rest of the day and evening free to explore on your own Overnight Ho Chi Minh City.

Day 10: Ho Chi Minh City Tour – Full Day (B, L)

After breakfast, enjoy a guided city tour starting with the War Remnants Museum - a real eye-opener to a part of Vietnam's proud history, followed by the Reunification Palace, the former Presidential Palace for the president of the South of Vietnam, the Notre Dame Cathedral and Old Post office to get good shots for our memory of the big, modern city of Vietnam. After lunch at a

local restaurant, you will continue by heading to Chinatown with walking tour through back streets of China town near Cho Lon to view the local daily life. Stop off for a visit of Thien Hau temple, which was built in the early 19th Century dedicated to Thien Hau, the goddess of seafarers. We delve deeper into Chinatown visiting the amazing Cholon and Binh Tay Market (or Ben Thanh market) for an insight into where locals shop.

Return to the hotel around 17h00

Overnight Ho Chi Minh City.

Day 11: Farm to Table Cooking Class – Visit Cu Chi Tunnels (B, L)

Learn the secrets of local Cuisine with our English-speaking Vietnamese Chef!

At 08h30 you will be picked up for your visit to the Agricultural Village which is about 40km from the city centre. Upon arrival, you will visit a vast farm and an organic garden with many kinds of herbs, spices and vegetables. Your guide will show you around and explain the use of them. You will also visit the Mushroom House to learn how to grow mushrooms. Later, experience what it is like to be a Vietnamese farmer – select herbs and vegetables from the garden under guidance of your chef. Sit down and discover Vietnamese kitchenware to cook and enjoy a tasty 3 courses meal under guidance of your talented professional chef. You will then sample your own dishes after cooking. During the class you can just concentrate on the pleasure of discovering and cooking, you will be provided all detailed recipes at the end. Menu for vegetarians or customers with specific food allergies can be adapted so please let us know in advance so we can accommodate for you. Kids from 7 years old are welcome.

After lunch you will drive to visit the Cu Chi tunnels. The tunnels are 75 kms northwest of Ho Chi Minh City, an area that played an important role during Vietnam's wars for independence and unification. The more than 200 km of tunnels built here by the Communist guerrillas are the often the highlight of South Vietnam touring. You can explore the bedrooms, meeting rooms, air-raided shelters, smokeless kitchens, and experience life underground in this extraordinary tunnel complex. Return by road to Ho Chi Minh City, arriving in the late afternoon.

Overnight Ho Chi Minh City.



Day 12: Explore the Mekong Delta – Cai Thia – Vinh Long – Transfer to Can Tho (B, L)

This morning head south to Vinh Long in the Mekong Delta. Arrival at Cai Thia about 10h00, walk along the canal to visit Cai Thia church, My Luong temple, and some brick kilns. Get on a sampan and cruise the peaceful waterway to visit a local house where they produce the typical rice paper. Next, pick up your bicycle to cycle through the villages on the winding countryside roads of Hoa Loc village - known for varieties of mango under cultivation in the Mekong Delta thanks to its aroma and sweetness. There will be many opportunities to interact with locals as you cycle through the villages. You will also call in a local family for a cup of green tea and taste some local specialties.

After cycling, return to your boat and enjoy tasty lunch while cruising towards An Binh Island. Once you reach the Luc Cu Canal, a rowing boat will take you deeper into the countryside of the Delta

through the networks of small canals with traditional houses on both sides and lots of daily life activities. Visit another local family where you will taste some fresh tropical fruits and enjoy the traditional music performance by the locals. Continue cruising and stop at a workshop where the locals make coconut candy, pop-rice, and popcorn or rice vodka. Cross the mighty Mekong after visiting some floating houses and fish farms and disembark at Vinh Long at around 16h00 where your private vehicle awaits and transfer you to Can Tho in the heart of the Mekong Delta for overnight stay.

Overnight Can Tho.

Day 13: Boat Trip to Visit Cai Rang Floating Market – Return to Ho Chi Minh City (B)

Today a half hour boat cruise will take you to visit the vibrant Cai Rang floating market to experience a special type of market in which all purchasing activities take place on boats and ships. Then continue to small canal to visit a fruit garden where your guide will show you around before having a plate of delicious fruits. Return to Can Tho and observing the rural life and the lush vegetation along the riverbanks. Drive back to Ho Chi Minh City with lunch en-route, arriving in the late afternoon.

Note: Cai Rang market is one of the three biggest markets (Cai Be, Phung Hiep, Cai Rang) in the Mekong Delta. You can visit the market at any time of the day, but it is most crowded and busy from sunrise to 06h00

Overnight Ho Chi Minh City.



Day 14: Ho Chi Minh City Departure (B)

Breakfast, hotel check out and in time transfer to Tan Son Nhat airport in Ho Chi Minh City for your departure flight.

Service ends

Price on request: res2@bltrips.co.za