

11-DAY VIETNAM IMPRESSION TOUR

HANOI · HA LONG BAY · HUE · DANANG · HOI AN · CAI BE · HO CHI MINH CITY



Vietnam, looked like an elongated 'S' on the map, with the South China Sea to the East and borders with Laos and Cambodia to the West, is a country with fertile farmlands and lush forests. The Vietnamese traced their origin to a legendary union between a dragon from the ocean and a fairy from the mountains; the union spawned a hundred sons. From 111 AD, for a millennium, Vietnam was dominated by China and influence by its culture. They adopted Chinese characters for written communication, and a social structure based on Confucianism, a philosophy of social organization that persists in the country to this day. In the 10th century, during the deterioration of China's Tang Dynasty, a general named Ngo Quyen defeated the Chinese and established the Ngo dynasty of Co Loa. Vietnam had obtained independence. In 1010, the first of the great Vietnamese Dynasty, the Ly, came into power and established its capital at Dai La, the present day Hanoi. The Ly and the succeeding dynasty, the Trans, brought about a period of prosperity. The independent state did not live in peace for long with conflicts with the Khmer (modern-day Cambodians) from the North and the Champa from South. In the 13th century, they repelled the formidable invading Mongols and Kublai Khan who had conquered China and Korea. After that, the Vietnamese resumed fighting with the Champa that weakened the Tran Dynasty until the Chinese seized a chance and swept back to power in Vietnam dur-

ing the Ming Dynasty. In the 15th century, Le Loi, a national hero in Vietnam history, defeated the Mings and brought about a brief period of stability. In the early 16th century, a Le general usurped power from the reigning Le King and the country divided into two camps of rival lords: the Trinh in the North and the Nguyen in the South. In the next two centuries, the country was in a state of periodic civil wars between the two. These conflicts opened the doors for European who provided arms to both sides and missionaries started to arrive. In the late 17th century, Alexandre de Rhodes, a French Jesuit, created a Romanized alphabet as an alternative of the cumbersome Chinese scripts. In the 19th century, after England took Hong Kong from China, the French tried to gain a stronger foothold in Asia and set their sight on Vietnam. King Tu Duc did not have the means to defend against the French and agreed to give up the lower third of Vietnam as the colony of Cochinchina. In 1887, the French Indochina was formed with Cochinchina (South Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos) as colony, and protectorates of Annam (Central Vietnam) and Tonkin (North Vietnam). After the Russian Revolution in 1917, Marxism was introduced to Vietnam and adapted by Ho Chi Minh's Viet Minh front, a resistant party fighting for Vietnam's independence. The country was briefly ruled by Japan with a puppet Vichy French government during WWII. After the War, the French reasserted control ceded to the Japanese and the First Indo-

china War started and lasted for 8 years. In 1954, the French was defeated in Dien Bien Phu. Nevertheless, the country was still divided between Ho Chi Minh's Communist government in the North and the Republic of Vietnam in the South supported by the United States. The second Indochina War, or Vietnam War, was fought for 21 years from 1954 – 1975 between the Chinese and Soviet supported North and the United States supported South. In 1975, The country was unified by the Vietnam Communist Party after the United States withdrew all their troops. For the next 20 years, Vietnam was practically isolated from the Western world with trade embargo imposed by the United States. They received \$3 billion in aids each year from the Soviet Union. The dissolve of the Soviet Union in 1991 caused a change in direction of the government and led to normalize relationship with the West. In 1994, President Bill Clinton lifted the trade embargo and normalized diplomatic relationship in the following year, opened an embassy in Hanoi. In the same year, Vietnam became a member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Today, Vietnam is a nation on the rise with economic growth at an impressive 6% per year. With Ha Long Bay's incomparable seascape, the cloud-covered highland peaks, Mekong Delta waterways and splendid limestone grottos...beautiful natural sceneries, plus unique culture and cuisines, it becomes an exotic travel destination.

Tour Itinerary:

Day 01: U.S. - Hanoi
 Depart U.S. for Hanoi.

Day 02: Hanoi
 Arrive Hanoi, transfer to hotel.
 Accommodation: Hotel Nikko Hanoi.

Day 03: Hanoi
 Full day Hanoi city tour visiting Ho Chi Minh's Mausoleum, Temple of Literature, Fine Art Museum, Quan Thanh Temple, Hanoi Old Quarter Hoan Kiem Lake and traditional water puppet show.(B/L/D).

Day 04: Hanoi - Ha Long Bay
 Journey through the Red River Delta and rural landscape for Ha Long Bay where lies 3,000 islands differently shaped by mother nature in the passage of time. Cruise the bay on board of the Halong Phoenix Cruiser and observe the limestone seascape. Visit a fisherman's floating abode and kayaking to the Luon Cave. (B/L/D).
 Accommodation: Halong Phoenix Cruiser.

Day 05: Ha Long Bay - Hanoi
 Cruise to a different part of Ha Long Bay to the Drum Cave, Man's Head Islet and Fairman's Cave. Then onward to Van Gia Fishing Village, one of the oldest floating village in Ha Long Bay. Return to Hanoi in the afternoon. (B/L).
 Accommodation: Hotel Nikko Hanoi.

Day 06: Hanoi - Hue
 Transfer to airport for a domestic flight to the historical city of Hue, the former capital of the Nguyen Lords. Tour the city of Hue and the imperial Citade. (B/L).
 Accommodation: Imperial Hotel.

Day 07: Hue - Da Nang - Hoi An
 Tour of the Huong River by boat, visiting Dong Ba market, Thien Mu Pagoda and the Royal tomb of King Tu Duc. After lunch, onward to the port city of Hoi An and visit the Cham Museum in Da Nang City enroute. (B/L).
 Accommodation: Palm Garden Resort.

Day 08: Hoi An - Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon)
 Morning tour of the city of Hoi An, visit the Hoi An Market, Tan Ky old house, and the Fukien Assembly Hall. After lunch, transfer to Da Nang Airport for domestic flight to Saigon. (B/L).
 Accommodation: Movenpick Hotel Saigon.

Day 09: Saigon - Vinh Long - Can Tho
 Depart Saigon and journey to Cai Be in the heart of the Mekong Delta. Cruise on the Mekong and its canals to Vinh Long. In the

afternoon, onward to the city of Can Tho, the rice basket of Vietnam. (B/L).
 Accommodation: Ninh Kieu 2 Hotel.

Day 10: Can Tho - Saigon
 Morning visit to the Cai Rang Floating Market and a fruit orchard. Return to Saigon in the afternoon. (B/L).
 Accommodation: Movenpick Hotel Saigon.

Day 11: Saigon
 Morning visit to Cu Chi and a complex underground tunnels system used by the Viet Congs in the Vietnam war. Afternoon visit to the War Remnants Museum, the former Presidential Palace, Notre Dame Cathedral and the General Post Office. (B/L).

Day 12: Saigon - U.S.
 Transfer to airport for flight back to the U.S.

2013 Tour Costs:

Air: airfares are seasonal and predicated on availability and fuel surcharges. Please call for information.

Land Costs per person:

2 people travel together	\$1,795
Family discounts: 3-6 people travel together	\$1,620
Single room supplement	\$820

Prices subject to change without notice.

