



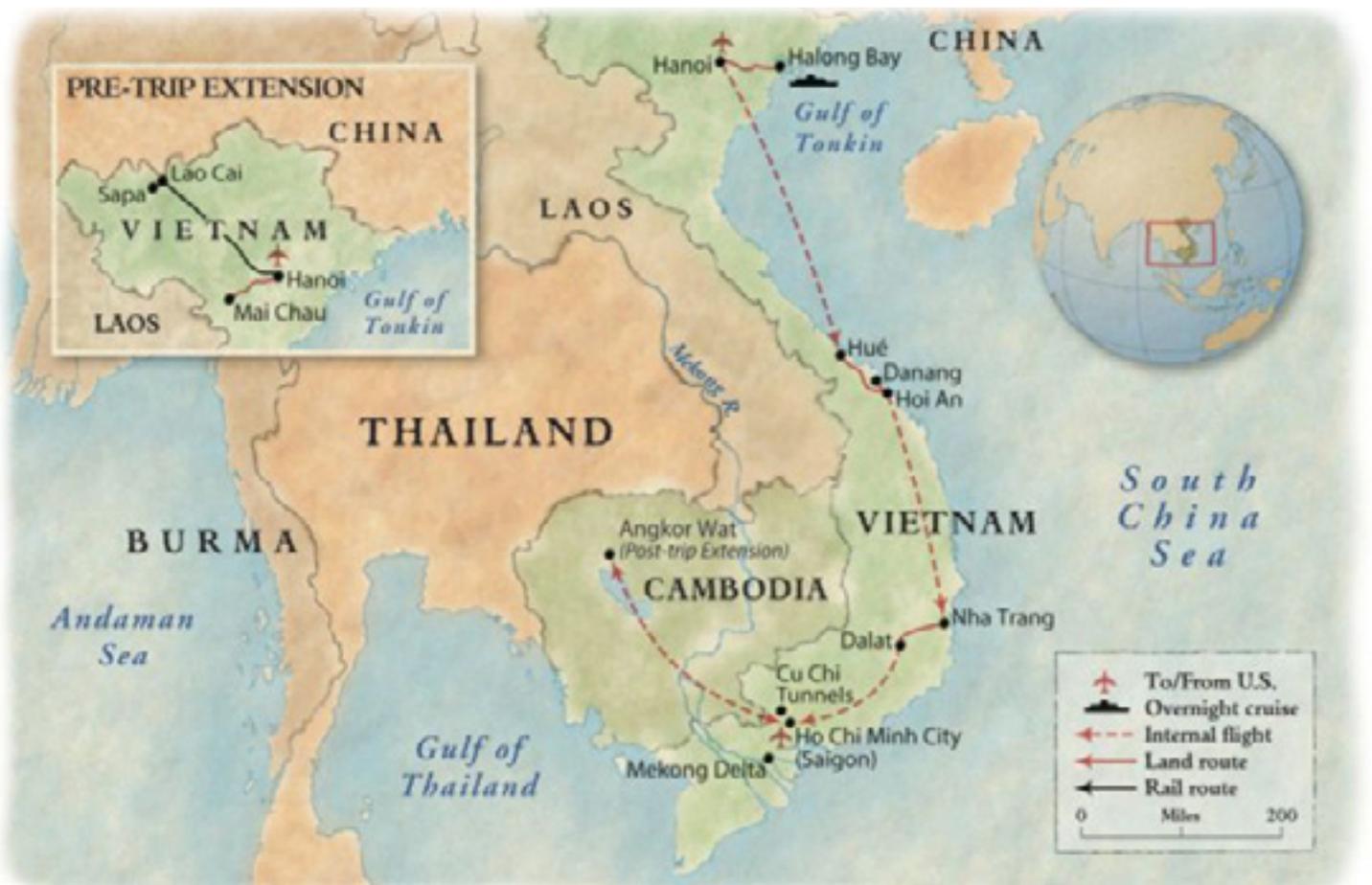
## Inside Vietnam Aug. 22 - Sept. 10, 2022

*Vietnam is a nation reborn, and we invite you to discover the depth of its beauty while traversing the country from north to south on this comprehensive adventure, which has a 96% traveler excellence rating. Travel from Hanoi to Ho Chi Minh City, stopping en route to cruise along Halong Bay, explore ancient Hué, witness the idyllic seaside retreat of Nha Trang, experience French-flavored Dalat, and much more.*

*Thanks to our small group size and local Trip Experience Leader, you'll enjoy many personal interactions with the people of Vietnam, from meeting the children of an orphanage or school to spending A Day in the Life of a local village. You'll even enjoy an overnight cruise on a traditional Vietnamese sailboat in Halong Bay—an intimate experience that's only possible in a small group like ours. From the bustling cities to the serene seaside to the lush highlands, let Vietnam's warmth and beauty amaze you—in all its diversity.*

*And whenever you'd like, you have the freedom to explore more of Vietnam on your own: Break off from the group for independent discoveries—like visiting the Vietnamese Women's Museum, witnessing the Royal Tombs of the Nguyen Dynasty, and more—during free time.*

**REMINDER:** Space for this special journey is available on a first-come, first-serve basis and is truly limited. To reserve your place today, please call Curtis Whitaker at **(269) 209-5889**. If you haven't experienced a Scott & Curtis travel adventure before, feel free to ask questions or meet with our staff.



## Snapshot Itinerary: Inside Vietnam 2022

Travel Dates: *Aug. 22 - Sept. 10, 2022*

Day 1 – Depart U.S.

Day 2 – Fly to Hanoi, Vietnam

Day 3 – Arrive in Hanoi, Vietnam

Day 4 – Explore Hanoi / Local interaction / Water Puppet Demonstration

Day 5 – Hanoi / Tho Ha Village Visit

Day 6 – Hanoi / Visit Bat Trang Ceramic Village

Day 7 – Overland to Halong Bay / Embark on Overnight Cruise

Day 8 – Halong Bay cruising / Fly to Hué

Day 9 – Explore Hué / Minh Tu Orphanage Visit

Day 10 – Overland to Hoi An / Cooking Class

Day 11 – Explore Hoi An / Optional Cyclo-rickshaw Ride and Thu Bon River Cruise

Day 12 – Hoi An / Explore Champa Ruins at My Son Sanctuary

Day 13 – Fly to Nha Trang

Day 14 – A Day in the Life of Xóm Gio Village

Day 15 – Overland to Dalat / Home-Hosted Dinner

Day 16 – Dalat / Optional Dalat Agricultural Tour / University Student Discussion

Day 17 – Fly to Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon) / Motorbike Excursion

Day 18 – Overland to the Mekong Delta / Sampan ride / Local Interaction

Day 19 – Explore the Cu Chi Tunnels / Viet Cong Veterans Discussion

Day 20 – Return to the U.S.



**COVID-19 UPDATE:** Your health and safety is our #1 priority. In partnership with our travel providers Great Circle Travel and OAT, we are monitoring the COVID-19 situation daily, including how it may impact future travel plans in late 2022 and 2023. If any changes are made, we will do our best to alert you as soon as possible. If you have questions in the meantime, please call Curtis Whitaker during regular business hours at (269) 209-5889. Thank you!





## Detailed Itinerary: Inside Vietnam 2022

### Day 1 – Depart U.S.

Due to different air carriers and varied flight schedules, some travelers will fly from their home city to a domestic gateway city later today.

### Day 2 – Fly to Hanoi, Vietnam

Early this morning, you'll fly from your domestic gateway to Hanoi, Vietnam.

### Day 3 – Arrive in Hanoi, Vietnam

Activity Note: Hanoi is a dense, urban area known for its high volume of people, activity, and motorbikes. During today's exploration, and throughout our time here, you'll be among it all, and the variety of sights, smells, and sounds may feel overwhelming to some travelers at first. Come prepared with a spirit of adventure and curiosity.

Morning: Arrive in Hanoi, Vietnam's capital and second-largest city, sometime in the morning, depending on your specific flight arrangements. An O.A.T. representative will meet us at the airport and escort us to our hotel via minibus—a transfer of about 40 minutes, depending on traffic. Here we'll be joined by travelers who took our optional The Hill Tribes of Northern Vietnam extension.

Upon arrival, we will check in and receive your room assignment. We stay for four nights in our centrally located hotel. Depending on which hotel we stay at, amenities may include a health club, restaurant, bar/lounge, and a rooftop terrace. Typical rooms include a minibar, TV, air-conditioning, wireless Internet, coffee- and tea-making facilities, and a private bath with hair dryer.

Lunch: On your own. You are free to dine at the hotel restaurant, or settle into your room to get refreshed after your journey to Hanoi.

**REMINDER:** *Space for this special journey is available on a first-come, first-serve basis and is truly limited. To reserve your place today, please call Curtis Whitaker at (269) 209-5889. Welcome!*

Afternoon: Enjoy some free time before we gather as a small group for the first time at 5pm, at which time we will



introduce ourselves and meet our Trip Experience Leader. A short walk around the vicinity of our hotel will give us a chance to get acclimated.

During our walk, we'll get our first taste of local life here in Hanoi, a pulsing city of about seven million people. From 1883 to 1945, Hanoi was the heart of French Indochina, and the French influence is still clearly visible today. The Old Quarter is a dense collection of markets, cafés, and restaurants—many of which embrace an al fresco spirit. Tables and people spill out onto the bustling, narrow streets, filling the area with the sounds of chatter, dining, and drinking. A short stop into a local beer garden will give us the chance to sample bia hoi, a popular local lager. While here, we'll have the opportunity to not only soak up the lively energy of this establishment, but also strike up conversations with locals who frequent this beer garden after work. After, we'll continue on and our walk will end at a local restaurant.

### **Important Travel Notes:**

- For your comfort and safety, we recommend this tour for individuals in good physical condition. If you have difficulty walking, this may be a difficult trip for you.
- We reserve the right to cancel this tour due to insufficient registration. Full refund will be given if tour is canceled due to insufficient registration.
- If traveling alone, we will match you up with a roommate (this tour is double occupancy only).
- Please read the “What to Expect” box on the next page carefully. If you have further questions, call Curtis Whitaker at **(269) 209-5889**.

**Dinner:** On your own—you may choose to venture out in search of a local restaurant that serves traditional Vietnamese cuisine. Or, perhaps you'll head over to Cha Ca La Vong, a street named after a popular fried fish dish among Hanoians, which is served from street carts here.

**Evening:** On your own—you are free to rest in your room after your flight, or reach out to your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations on things to do in the area.

**Freedom to Explore:** During your four days in Hanoi, you have the freedom to explore this ancient city on your own during your free time. Below are some recommended options for independent explorations:

*Explore the Vietnamese Women's Museum:* Journey through Vietnam's history and see how the roles of women—in their families and within Vietnamese society—have evolved over time.

How to get there: A 5- to 10-minute taxi ride, about \$2 USD one way. Hours: 8am-5pm, daily. Cost: About \$1.50 USD.

*Discover the Hanoi Train Street:* Witness daily life unfold, uninterrupted, as a train hurtles down the narrow street mere inches away. How to get there: A 5- to 10-minute taxi ride, about \$2 USD one way. Hours: 3:30pm and 7:30pm, daily. Cost: Free.

*Witness the Perfume Pagoda:* Journey to the vast complex of cliffside pagodas and shrines on Huong Tich Mountain, and enjoy a scenic boat ride. How to get there: A 90-minute car ride, one way, and a 2-hour rowboat cruise, included in tour cost. Hours: Departs at 8am, returns at 3pm. Cost: About \$66-\$140 USD.

#### **Day 4 – Explore Hanoi / Local interaction / Water Puppet Demonstration**

Morning: We'll meet with our Trip Experience Leader for a Welcome Briefing at 9am in the hotel. During this 45-minute briefing, we will review our itinerary in more detail (including any changes that may need to occur). Our Trip Experience Leader will also discuss logistics, safety and emergency procedures, and answer any questions we may have.

Just after 10am, we'll set off on a 20-minute bus ride to the home of a local family. We will meet a local water puppet master and his family—and our small group size gives us the unique opportunity to learn how these intricate puppets are made. We'll also enjoy a hands-on demonstration on how to manipulate the puppets to make them move—an O.A.T.-exclusive experience. Here, the art form of water puppetry continues to thrive at least 1,000 years after it originated with peasants in the Red River Delta of the north. Puppets are suspended over water and directed by puppet masters who must sit, semi-submerged, for hours at a time. The French used to call

### **Vaccinations Information**

Our travel partner GCT requires a valid Covid-19 vaccination **plus** booster shot for all travelers. For other vaccinations that **may** be recommended for this trip, please visit the CDC's "Traveler's Health" website at [www.cdc.gov/travel](http://www.cdc.gov/travel). In addition, we recommend the following before you leave on your trip:

- Have a medical checkup with your doctor.
- Pick up any necessary medications, both prescription and over-the-counter.
- Have a dental and/or eye checkup, if possible.

### **What to Expect: Inside Vietnam 2022**

■ **Physical Requirements:** Not appropriate for travelers using wheelchairs, walkers, or other mobility aids. You must be able to walk 2-3 miles unassisted and participate in 4-6 hours of physical activities each day. Agility and balance are required for embarking riverboat, and wooden "drawing boats". We reserve the right for Trip Experience Leaders to restrict participation, or in some circumstances send travelers home, if their limitations impact the group's experience.

■ **Terrain & Transportation:** Travel over some bumpy unpaved roads, walk along city streets and ancient ruins, and visit monuments, often with uneven paths and walkways with no handrails. Travel by 35-passenger coach, riverboat, and wooden "drawing boats". Three internal flights, each about 1 hour. Flight Information: Travel time in country will be 20-30 hours and will most likely have two connections.

■ **Accommodations:** All accommodation feature private baths and Western-style toilet facilities. Asian squat-style toilets must be used in some locations without other facilities.

■ **Climate:** Daytime temperatures range from 80-90°F. April-June are the hottest months, with high levels of humidity and heavy rains likely.

### **Passport & Visa Information**

Your passport should meet these requirements for this itinerary: It should be valid for at least 6 months after your scheduled return to the U.S. It should have the recommended number of blank pages (refer to the handbook for details). The blank pages must be labeled "Visas" at the top. Pages labeled "Amendments and Endorsements" are not acceptable.

U.S. citizens will need a visa (or visas) for this trip. In addition, there may be other entry requirements that also need to be met. Travelers who are booked on this adventure will be sent a complete Visa Packet— with instructions, applications, and a list of visa fees—approximately 100 days prior to their departure. (Because many countries limit the validity of their visa from the date it is issued, or have a specific time window for when you can apply, we do not recommend applying too early.)



these puppets “the souls of the Vietnamese rice fields”—made of lacquered, water-resistant fig wood, they depict villagers, farm animals, dragons, and more. We’ll conclude our discoveries here around noon and board our bus for a 30-minute drive to a local restaurant.

**Lunch:** Around 12:30pm at a local restaurant, featuring traditional cuisine.

**Afternoon:** Around 1:45pm, we’ll drive back to the hotel, arriving around 2pm. The early afternoon will be on your own—you’ll have a few hours to rest in your room, or gather with your fellow travelers in the hotel to reflect on the morning’s discoveries. Perhaps you’ll want to set off and start exploring the Old Quarter on your own. Your Trip Experience Leader will be happy to provide recommendations for galleries, cafés, and more. Then around 5:30pm, we’ll gather at the hotel and board cyclo-rickshaws and ride for 30 minutes through the Old Quarter to a local restaurant.

**Dinner:** At about 6pm in a local restaurant. Tonight’s Welcome Dinner will feature local cuisine and includes an appetizer, main course, and dessert. Bottled water or soft drinks, and a beer or glass of wine are included.

**Evening:** We return to the hotel just after 7pm and the rest of the evening is on your own. Settle in with a drink at the bar, or ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations for entertainment or exploration.

### **Day 5 – Hanoi / Tho Ha Village Visit**

**Morning:** Around 9am, we’ll regroup and travel by bus to Tho Ha Village where we’ll see what daily life is like in rural Vietnam. We’ll set off on a 90-minute journey north, stopping along the way at a local war cemetery around 9:30am to hear firsthand accounts of the Vietnam War from a unique perspective: North Vietnamese veterans. This conversation about life here during and after the war will certainly provide new insights for many Americans.

Around 10:15am, we’ll board our bus again and drive 30 minutes to a ferry station where we’ll board a ferry for a 10-minute ride across the Nhu Nguyet River to reach our destination: the village of Tho Ha, a showcase of traditional architecture, winding streets, terracotta buildings, and an ancient community hall. Upon arrival just before 11am, we’ll take a walk through the village, navigating small alleys and seeing scenes of daily life as we explore. While it was known for its ceramics in the past, one of the chief industries here today is rice paper, which we’ll discover beginning at 11:15am when locals show us how to make it. Then, it will be our turn to try our hands at making this specialty. We’ll also connect with a community of friendly, hard-working locals—from the residents who show us how to play musical instruments to the village chief, who will discuss how life has changed since Vietnam’s independence from France.

**Lunch:** Around 12:15pm in the home of a local family in the village, featuring traditional dishes.



Afternoon: Just after 1pm we'll head back to the ferry station before driving to our hotel. Upon arrival around 2:30pm, you're free to settle in at the hotel with a book, take a nap, or explore. Your Trip Experience Leader will be happy to provide you with recommendations. Perhaps you'll seek out a café in the Old Quarter, or discover the Temple of Literature, built in 1070 and home to Vietnam's first national university. You may visit the Hoa Lo Prison, also referred to as the "Hanoi Hilton." Hoa Lo was constructed during the French occupation of Vietnam in the 19th century and it was active until the late 20th century. Now the majority of the prison serves as a museum, which gives insight into its controversial history. Learn about the POWs that were held here and the overcrowding and unsanitary living conditions they were subjected to. Or, you can visit the Vietnamese Women's Museum to discover the many contributions women have made in Vietnam throughout the country's history.

Dinner: On your own. Your Trip Experience Leader will be happy to provide some recommendations. You may venture out in search of a restaurant that serves local dishes like banh xeo. A mix of French influence and Vietnamese flavors compliment each other in this dish made with a crepe, pork, shrimp, and bean sprouts.

Evening: On your own with the freedom to turn in for the night or continue your independent exploration with tips from your Trip Experience Leader.

#### **Day 6 – Hanoi / Visit Bat Trang Ceramic Village**

Activity Note: This morning's visit to Ho Chi Minh's mausoleum involves strict dress and etiquette requirements. Shorts or skirts are not allowed, as legs must be covered while inside. Visitors are required to remain silent upon entering the building, with their hands out of pockets and arms uncrossed. The mausoleum is closed every Monday and Friday (the outside grounds and garden area will be open on these days), and is normally closed for preservation and maintenance from September 4 to November 5.

Morning: Around 9:30am, we'll depart by bus for Ba Dinh Square, a pivotal site in 20th-century Vietnamese history. It was here in September 1945 that Ho Chi Minh read Vietnam's Declaration of Independence, and it's here today that the national leader's body rests within a massive granite mausoleum. Around 10am, we'll view the complex from its exterior—taking in the sight of guards, flowers, and more—before we enter the building to view the former president's preserved remains. Along the way, we'll behold the One Pillar Pagoda, widely considered one of Vietnam's most iconic Buddhist temples. Built of wood atop a single, four-foot-wide stone pillar and designed to resemble a lotus flower, the temple's origins date back to the year 1049. We'll explore this area for around 1 hour before returning to our bus just before 11:30am for a short 10-minute drive to a local restaurant.

Lunch: At a local restaurant in Hanoi around 11:30am, featuring local cuisine. We'll enjoy a traditional barbecue dish consisting of fresh noodles and pickles, and topped with a sweet fish sauce.

Afternoon: Shortly after 12:30pm, we'll drive 10 minutes back to the hotel. You have a couple of hours to spend as you'd like. You may choose to prepare for tomorrow's journey to Halong Bay, or ask your Trip Experience Leader for one more recommendation on a can't-miss Hanoi experience.

Around 2:45pm, we'll regroup and depart by bus for Bat Trang, a small village about 45 minutes away, on the southeastern outskirts of Hanoi. Since the 14th century, Bat Trang has been known and celebrated for its signature ceramic pottery, crafted from rich white clay with precision and skill. Our small group size grants us access to the Tran Hung ceramics workshop, where generations of craftspeople have been perfecting the art of ceramics. Upon arrival around 3:30pm, we will meet with an artist and their family. We'll learn about the artist's daily routine and the ceramics process, from forming the clay to painting the distinctive, intricate designs that have been coveted by customers for centuries. Then, we'll have the chance to make ceramic pieces ourselves. Afterwards around 4pm, we'll walk for around 10 minutes among the locals and wander about town, making time to explore

the colorful vases, bowls, flowerpots, and more within the village market.

We'll conclude our walk just after 4pm and learn about a controversial period of Vietnamese history through the eyes of two former landlords. We'll discover Vietnam's land reform, a mid-20th-century movement that redistributed ownership of land from landlords to a state-run series of collective farms. As part of the movement, thousands of landlords (or those purported to be landlords) were killed—for those who survived, their places and roles within villages were forever altered. The former landlords we'll meet with today will share how this change has impacted their families and the local economy.

Our return to Hanoi will begin around 5:15pm, when we reboard the bus for a 45-minute ride back to the hotel.

Dinner: On your own, with the freedom to seek out local cuisine or familiar American standards. In either case, your Trip Experience Leader will be ready with recommendations. You may want to find a place that serves traditional dishes like refreshing spring rolls, known as goi cuon.

Evening: You're free to turn in for the night, or make the most of your time in Hanoi with independent exploration.



You may ask your Trip Experience Leader for their tips.

### **Day 7 – Overland to Halong Bay / Embark on Overnight Cruise**

**Activity Note:** Today, our transfer from Hanoi to Halong Bay will involve a 4-hour bus ride over roads that may be bumpy or uneven at times. We'll be spending the rest of the day—and the night—aboard a wooden sailboat, except for a visit into a cave, which features uneven surfaces.

**Morning:** We begin our day at 8am, boarding a bus for a 4-hour ride east to Halong Bay, the “emerald bay of Vietnam” and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. With clear waters and mountains draped in velvety cloaks of vegetation, it's little wonder that the bay has served as inspiration for generations of Vietnamese poets.

Arriving around noon, we'll step off the bus and onto a traditional wooden sailboat. Thanks to our small group size, this boat will serve not only as our vessel for the afternoon, but also our accommodations for the night. Upon boarding, we'll receive our cabin assignments and have a brief opportunity to settle in while our cruise begins. While traditional, our boat does feature modern touches and a private bar, and each cabin includes air-conditioning and a private bath with shower.

**Lunch:** Regional seafood dishes and other traditional options, served onboard at about 12:30pm.

**Afternoon:** While relaxing on our boat's sun deck, we are free to marvel at the daily life on Halong Bay—whose name translates to “the bay of the descending dragon.” Resting peacefully across the Gulf of Tonkin near the Chinese border, the bay is dotted with more than 1,600 mountain islands, whose jagged profiles seem to rise out of nowhere. Against the backdrop of innumerable caves, beaches, soaring cliffs, and grottoes, the Vietnamese go about their daily lives: Harvesting and fishing, they reap the riches of the land and sea. Vietnamese fishermen nimbly navigate in lacquered and woven-wood coracles, lozenge-shaped and rudderless vessels that resemble oversized tubs. Flat-bottomed and oar-propelled fishing boats, or sampans, abound as well—many occupied by entire families.

At about 3:30pm, we'll stop to explore a cavernous grotto, and then drop anchor at an island pierced with surreal caves that we'll explore for about 1.5 hours. The bay's caves are popular among visitors and locals alike, as the stone formations seem to drip like candlewax from the ceiling or down the walls. Resuming our cruise at about 5pm, we'll sharpen our culinary skills

### **What's Included in the Package**

- International airfare, airport transfers, government taxes, fees, and airline fuel surcharges
- Accommodations for 17 nights.
- 40 meals—daily breakfast, 13 lunches, and 10 dinners (including 1 Home-Hosted Dinner).
- 18 included features: 11 guided tours and 7 exclusive Discovery Series events:
- Explore in a small group of 8-16 travelers (average group size of 14).
- 23 small group activities.
- Exclusive services of a local O.A.T. Experience Leader.
- Gratuities on your main trip for local guides, ship crew and motorcoach drivers



when our boat's chef teaches us how to make vegetable garnishes and spring rolls during an onboard cooking demonstration.

**Dinner:** Onboard at about 6:30pm, featuring regional seafood dishes and other traditional options.

**Evening:** On your own aboard our boat. You're free to rest up before tomorrow's discoveries, enjoy a book in the boat's common spaces, or ask your Trip Experience Leader for even more insights into the history of life on the bay.

### **Day 8 – Halong Bay Cruising / Fly to Hué**

**Activity Note:** Today will be a long travel day. Our transfer from Halong Bay to the airport in Hanoi will involve a bus ride of about 3.5 hours, over roads that may be bumpy or uneven at times. The day also includes a flight of a little more than an hour.

**Morning:** This morning, we can spend our last few hours here soaking up the scenery of Halong Bay while our boat cruises back to port. Disembarking the vessel around 9:45am, we'll begin our transfer to Hanoi Airport,



arriving around 1:30pm.

**Lunch:** On your own. Our Trip Experience Leader will accompany us to a spot where you can grab snacks before we head to the airport, or you may wish to enjoy lunch at the airport after going through security.

**Afternoon:** Our flight south to Hué departs shortly before 3pm and will take just over an hour. Upon landing, we'll have about a 30-minute bus ride to our hotel, after which we'll check in and get our room assignments. Depending on where we stay, our accommodations for the next two nights should be conveniently located in the center of the city, close to the Huong River. Decorated in the Vietnamese style, your room will most likely include wireless Internet and a plasma TV, minibar, private balcony, and private bath with robes and hairdryer. Then, you'll have about 1 hour to refresh and get settled.

**Dinner:** At the hotel around 6:30pm, featuring regional cuisine.

**Evening:** On your own, with the freedom to kick off your discoveries before tomorrow's city tour.

**Freedom to Explore:** During your two days in Hué, you have the freedom to explore this city on your own during your free time. Below are some recommended options for independent explorations:

*Visit the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ):* Witness the famous (and infamous) no-man's land that separated North and South Vietnam during the Vietnam War on an 8-hour tour with an included lunch. How to get there: A driver will pick you up from the hotel. Hours: 8am-4pm, daily. A private, chartered tour of about 8 hours. Cost: About \$82-\$158 USD depending on the number of people in your group.

*Experience a night of traditional folk music:* Discover Hué's rich musical heritage while cruising the Perfume River aboard a dragon boat. How to get there: A 10- to 15-minute walk. Hours: 7pm and 8:30pm, daily. Cost: About \$75 USD; must be reserved in advance.

*Explore the Royal Tombs of the Nguyen Dynasty:* Step back through time on a 6- to 7-hour guided tour of the seven royal tombs along the Perfume River. How to get there: A driver will pick us up from the hotel. Hours: 8am-2:30pm, daily. A private tour of 6.5 hours. Cost: About \$80-\$130 USD depending on the number of people in your group.

### **Day 9 – Explore Hué / Minh Tu Orphanage Visit**

**Activity Note:** On select departures, our visit to Minh Tu Orphanage will be replaced with a visit to Dien Phu Kindergarten on Day 14. Because the kindergarten is not available year-round, we are unable to guarantee a visit here, whereas the orphanage is open year-round.

**Morning:** At about 9am, we gather and set off by bus for a

full morning of exploration. The former imperial capital, Hué was built by the first king of the Nguyen Dynasty during a time recognized as the golden age of Vietnam. For centuries, the city has been a main cultural, religious, and educational center—and that reputation continues with the many students who live here today.

The older section of the city is a moated, walled citadel surrounded by eleven stone gates. Nguyen empires ruled from the citadel until 1945, although in a mostly symbolic form after the French established Indochina in the 19th century. As we tour the citadel—a UNESCO World Heritage Site—around 9:30am, we'll find the Imperial Enclosure and see its inner Forbidden Purple City, a once-private area reserved for the emperor. During our explorations, we'll also learn about surprise attacks that were carried out here by the Viet Cong during the Tet Offensive. We then depart by bus around 11am for Dieu Thanh Pagoda, a small Buddhist pagoda and nunnery. We arrive just before 11:30am.

**Lunch:** Around 11:30am at the Dieu Thanh Pagoda, featuring simple vegetarian fare enjoyed by the local monks and nuns. This meal will not only introduce us to the dishes that the nuns are accustomed to, but also the manner in which the nuns dine—quietly as this is a meditation lunch.

**Afternoon:** Around 12pm, we'll enjoy an insightful discussion with one of the nuns that lives here. She'll tell us about why she decided to become a nun, how she is able to financially support herself, and what her family thinks of her decision. Afterward, we have the opportunity to ask our host any questions we may have.

Around 12:30pm, we'll drive back our hotel for some time on your own, arriving around 12:45pm. You may choose to visit the unofficial symbol of Hué, the seven-story tower of Thien Mu Pagoda, or perhaps you'll choose to enjoy a boat ride along the Perfume River.

Then around 4:30pm, we'll regroup to visit Minh Tu Orphanage, supported in part by Grand Circle Foundation. We'll see the clean and safe space this organization provides for the children and learn how it aims to encourage children to go to school. We'll also interact with some of the children and have the opportunity to see the improvements the Foundation has made to the orphanage, including renovating the dining hall and providing computers. We'll cap off our discoveries here just after 6pm and drive for 10 minutes to a local restaurant.

**Dinner:** At about 6:30pm at a local restaurant, featuring traditional cuisine.

**Evening:** On your own. You're free to retire to your room, chat with your fellow travelers in the hotel's common spaces, or to ask your Trip Experience Leader where to find me xung, Hué's beloved sesame candy.

### **Day 10 – Overland to Hoi An / Cooking Class**

**Activity Note:** Today's transfer to Hoi An includes a total of about three hours traveling by bus along roads that may be bumpy and uneven at times—including a winding mountain pass.

**Morning:** At about 8:30am, we'll drive to a nearby pier where we'll board a boat for a cruise to Thien Mu





Pagoda. We'll discover this temple's history that dates back to the 17th century and the symbolism of its seven stories before saying goodbye to Hué around 10:30am when we board our bus for the coastal village of Hoi An.

Lunch: At about noon along the way in a local restaurant.

Afternoon: At about 1:30pm, we'll walk to nearby My Khe Beach, which is better known to Americans as China Beach. This is the setting for the eponymous TV show about a U.S. army base in Vietnam, and now a peaceful 18 miles of white sand and waves. Then, around 2pm, we board our bus and finish our drive to Hoi An, arriving just after 3pm. We'll check in at our hotel and receive our room assignments. Depending on where we stay, our hotel for the next three nights should be conveniently located near Hoi An's Japanese bridge, ancient town, and night market; and will likely feature an on-site spa, fitness center, pool, restaurant, and bar/lounge. Typical rooms include a minibar, refrigerator, wireless Internet, and private bath with hair dryer.

You'll have about 2 hours of free time to settle into your room, freshen up, or explore the hotel grounds before we gather at 5:30pm and drive for 15 minutes to a local restaurant to take advantage of another opportunity made possible by our small group size—an intimate Vietnamese cooking lesson with the restaurant's chef.

During the demonstration, we'll learn to make some traditional dishes, which may include vegetable spring rolls, dumplings, grilled fish made in a banana leaf, and squid salad.

Dinner: At about 6pm, at the restaurant where we will savor the results of our hard work.

Evening: Around 7:30pm, we'll drive 15 minutes back to our hotel. The evening is your own. You're free to explore Hoi An as you'd like, and your Trip Experience Leader will be ready with recommendations to help you make the most of your time here.

Freedom to Explore: During your three days in Hoi An, you have the freedom to explore the city on your own during your free time. Below are some recommended options for independent explorations:

*Unwind on An Bang Beach:* Delight in this picturesque white-sand beach that's popular among local residents and lined with a variety of dining options. How to get there: A 10- to 15-minute taxi ride, about \$8 USD. Hours: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Cost: Free.

*Try your hand at a lantern workshop:* Hoi An is known as the "City of Lanterns," and you can learn how to craft these elegant and delicate silk pieces for yourself. How



to get there: A 15- to 20-minute taxi ride, about \$8 USD.  
Hours: 8:30am-4pm, daily. Cost: About \$7 USD.

*Volunteer at the Hoi An Care Center:* As part of the Center’s “Meal with Meat” program, you can visit a local market, buy food, and prepare a meal for up to 60 locals in need of a little help. A group of local volunteers will join you for this activity. How to get there: A 20- to 25-minute walk, or 10- to 15-minute taxi ride, about \$3 USD. Hours: Departs at 8:30am, returns after lunch. Cost: About \$50-\$120 USD in food donations.

### **Day 11 – Explore Hoi An / Optional Cyclo-rickshaw Ride and Thu Bon River Cruise**

**Morning:** Around 8:30am, we’ll board our bus and drive about 10 minutes to Hoi An’s Old Town where we’ll embark on a walking tour. A well-known feature in this port town is its Japanese covered bridge, complete with its own temple and statuary. We’ll amble through Hoi An’s historic streets, ride the local ferry to the other side of town, and observe the city’s mossy houses, including the Phuc Kien Congressional House. Most of Hoi An’s historic houses have been maintained in their traditional design, with brick exteriors and wooden interiors. And after many centuries of maritime trade, the town boasts a multicultural air: Traders from Persia, Arabia, China, Japan, and India, as well as the first Christian missionaries to reach Vietnam, have all left their marks. We’ll cap off our tour around 11:30am and walk around

30 minutes to a local restaurant.

**Lunch:** Around noon at a restaurant, featuring local cuisine.

**Afternoon:** You can enjoy the afternoon on your own—free to explore Hoi An independently. Your Trip Experience Leader can provide recommendations on what to do and where to go during this free time.

Or, if you’d prefer, you can choose to join an Optional Tour that gives us the chance to view the area by land and water. Around 3:30pm, we’ll depart our hotel by cyclo-rickshaw, riding to the village of Cam Thanh. We’ll spend about 45 minutes here—witnessing rural life, meeting local families, and visiting their farms and vegetable gardens—before we continue to a nearby boat station for a cruise along the Thu Bon River, which gives us a striking view of Hoi An’s historic cityscape. This Optional Tour includes the chance to sample the local flavors as we explore a central market, followed by dinner. We’ll return to the hotel around 7:30pm.

**Dinner:** For those who did not join the Optional Tour, tonight’s dinner is on your own. Perhaps you’ll dine with fellow travelers in the hotel, or venture out for a meal at a local restaurant. Dinner will be at a local restaurant at about 6pm for those on the Optional Tour.

Evening: Own your own, with freedom to discover more of the city as you'd like. Your Trip Experience Leader will be happy to provide recommendations.

Cyclo-Rickshaw ride & Thu Bon river cruise - \$65/person

We'll travel by cyclo-rickshaw to Cam Thanh village, see local family farms, view Hoi An's historic cityscape from a different vantage point during a cruise along the lovely Thu Bon River, and sample a slice of daily life at the central market. We'll dine at a nearby restaurant, with the glowing lights of Hoi An reflected on the nearby river.

### **Day 12 –Hoi An / Explore Champa Ruins at My Son Sanctuary**

Morning: We begin today early, departing Hoi An by bus around 7:30am. Our 75-minute ride will take us through the countryside's rice fields en route to My Son Sanctuary. This is Vietnam's most significant ruin from the ancient Champa Kingdom, which prospered from the second to 15th centuries.

Nestled in an isolated valley overlooked by Hon Quap (Cat's Tooth Mountain), My Son was established as a religious center in the fourth century. We'll learn about the history of the complex and its surroundings during our 2-hour tour, which gives us time to walk among the red-brick ruins and admire the masonry. We'll depart around 11:15am, arriving back in Hoi An about 12:30pm.

Lunch: Around 12:30pm at a local restaurant, featuring local cuisine.

Afternoon: Around 1:45pm, we'll drive for about 15 minutes back to the hotel. The rest of the day is on your own. You're free to take in the views along the riverbanks, or you may visit a local café.

Dinner: On your own—you're free to indulge in more local favorites, or enjoy familiar American standards. Your Trip Experience Leader is happy to provide you recommendations. Perhaps you'll seek out a traditional dish like banh khot. You can pop these miniature pancakes, topped with ingredients like shrimp, into your mouth to savor every morsel of flavor at once.

Evening: Tonight you are free to explore at your own pace, browse the local shops, or gather at the hotel with fellow travelers.

### **Day 13 – Fly to Nha Trang**

Morning: We have time this morning to pack our bags or relax. Or around 9am, you have the option to gather with some of your fellow travelers for a round table discussion on the complex history and controversial topics our group has encountered during our time in Vietnam. After, we begin our travel day to Nha Trang. Around 10:30am, we'll board our bus for a 30-minute ride to the airport in Danang, with time to check in before our 12:30pm flight. The flight itself is a short one—just about an hour.





**Lunch:** Our Trip Experience Leader will accompany us to a bakery before we leave for the airport. Here, you can grab a classic Vietnamese lunch like *bánh mì*, a sandwich that combines French and Vietnamese influence.

**Afternoon:** We'll arrive around 1:30pm in Nha Trang. We'll transfer to our hotel, arriving around 3pm, at which point we'll check in and receive our room assignments. We'll be here at our seaside accommodations for the next two nights, with time to enjoy the amenities. Depending on which hotel we stay in, those may include a swimming pool and bar, spa, garden area, private beach access, and views of Nha Trang Bay. Typical rooms feature air-conditioning, TV, wireless Internet, and a private bath.

You're free this afternoon to explore on your own. You may wish to take in Nha Trang's surroundings—the picturesque hills, turquoise bay, and offshore tropical islands. Or you could just take a stroll along the shoreline, where a beach-front promenade features several parks and sculpture gardens. Around 6pm, we'll regroup at our hotel and journey 10 minutes to a local restaurant.

**Dinner:** Around 6:30pm at a local restaurant, featuring traditional cuisine.

**Evening:** At about 7:30pm, we'll return to the hotel and the rest of the evening is on your own. Consider asking

your Trip Experience Leader for the best locales for whatever your preferences are.

**Freedom to Explore:** During your two days in Nha Trang, you have the freedom to explore the city on your own during your free time. Below are some recommended options for independent explorations:

*Discover Long Son Pagoda:* This late 19th-century pagoda features not only one of Vietnam's largest outdoor Buddha statues, but also a panoramic view of Nha Trang. How to get there: A 5- to 10-minute taxi ride, about \$2 USD. Hours: 8am-5pm, daily. Cost: Free.

*Visit the Nha Trang Oceanography Institute:* Founded in 1923, this is one of Vietnam's first centers for scientific research. How to get there: A 15- to 20-minute taxi ride, about \$4 USD. Hours: 6am-6pm, daily. Cost: About \$8 USD.

*Discover Nha Trang City by night:* Hop in a coach and buggy to take in the sights and sounds of the local nightlife on a relaxing tour of the city. How to get there: Buggy ride from hotel. Hours: 8pm, daily. Cost: About \$10-\$15 USD.

### **Day 14 – A Day in the Life of Xóm Gio Village**

**Morning:** We'll depart our hotel around 8:30am and travel on motorbikes (or by bus)—weather dependent—to a local market. Hold on tight to your driver, as we

zip around the frenetic streets before arriving at the market around 9am. During our time here, we'll have the opportunity to see locals going about their daily routines, and we'll have some time to shop for vegetables, or any ingredients that catch your eye, which we will help prepare later today during our A Day in the Life experience.

Then, around 9:30am, we'll hop back aboard our motorbikes and drive for 30 minutes to the riverside community of Xóm Gio for our A Day in the Life experience. As we approach the village, we'll be greeted by the chief. Around 10:30am, we'll walk around the village, greeted along the way by local families who make bamboo baskets. After our hosts demonstrate their time-honed process, we'll have the opportunity to roll up our sleeves and try weaving ourselves. Just before 11:30am, our Trip Experience Leader will facilitate a 1-hour conversation about daily life in the village and in Vietnam as a whole with our hosts. After, we'll help our hosts prepare a traditional meal with the ingredients we picked up at the market earlier.

**Lunch:** Around 12:30pm, we'll sit down with villagers for a lunch of savory, local fare, coupled with candid conversation about life in the village.

**Afternoon:** At about 1:30pm, we'll resume our walking exploration of the village and pass by local families making bamboo chopsticks. We may have opportunities

to stop and interact with the locals along the way.

We'll board our bus for the trip back to Nha Trang around 2pm, arriving back at our hotel about 45 minutes later. The rest of the afternoon is yours, with the freedom to explore as you'd like. You may choose to visit the 19th-century Long Son Pagoda, which features one of the country's largest outdoor Buddha statues. Or, perhaps you'll dive into Vietnam's scientific studies at the Nha Trang Oceanography Institute.

**Dinner:** On your own. Ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations on some of the best places for local fare, like bun bo nam bo, a dry noodle dish that combines a symphony of flavors and textures.

**Evening:** Free for your own discoveries. Your Trip Experience Leader can provide ideas based on their favorite local spots.

**Day 15 – Overland to Dalat / Home-Hosted Dinner**  
ctivity Note: Today's transfer to Dalat includes about four hours of bus travel, along roads that may be bumpy and uneven at times.

**Morning:** At 8am this morning, we'll board our bus for the journey to Dalat, nicknamed the "City of Eternal Spring." Our 4-hour ride to the west gives us an opportunity to admire the region's rice paddies, vegetable patches, and gently sloping hills that grow into mountains





along the way. Nestled in the mountains, Dalat is prized by the Vietnamese for its mild climate—Bao Dai, Vietnam’s last emperor, had his summer residence here. We’ll arrive in the city around noon.

**Lunch:** Around noon at a local restaurant, featuring Vietnamese cuisine. Here, we’ll have the opportunity meet members of a local hill tribe. The hill tribes in this area have inhabited these lands for centuries—around 150 years before the French settled here. Now, they live in areas outside the village, but are happy to commute into the city to share insight into their culture with us.

**Afternoon:** Arriving at our hotel around 2pm, we’ll check in and get our room assignments. Depending on where we stay, our hotel for the next two nights is located in the city center and will likely feature an on-site gym, spa, and several restaurants. Rooms typically include a satellite TV, minibar, wireless Internet, and private bath with hair dryer. At about 3pm (after about an hour of free time), you’re welcome to join our Trip Experience Leader for a short orientation walk around the neighborhood. The rest of the afternoon is free for you to spend as you’d like, whether you wish to explore the hotel or begin your own discoveries in Dalat. Around 6pm, we’ll learn about Dalat’s local culture from those who know it best: its residents. We’ll take taxis or our hosts may pick us up from the hotel for a 15-minute drive to their home.

**Dinner:** Around 6:15pm, we’ll enjoy a Home-Hosted Dinner with our hosts. Here we’ll see how residents go through their daily lives—where they live, what they cook, how they eat, and how they feel about their homeland. We’re afforded this special privilege by our

small group size, as it gives us the chance to connect on a one-on-one level, and to even share a little with our hosts about who we are and what has brought us to Vietnam. If you’d like, you may bring a small token of appreciation with you, whether it’s a local item from here in Dalat—you may ask your Trip Experience Leader for a recommendation—or a postcard or trinket from your hometown.

**Evening:** We’ll make the 15-minute return journey to our hotel via taxis, arriving around 8pm. The rest of the evening is on your own. You’re free to gather with your fellow travelers to discuss our dinner in greater detail, or to ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations on where to find the best kem bo (avocado ice cream).

**Freedom to Explore:** During your two days in Dalat, you have the freedom to explore the city on your own during your free time. Below are some recommended options for independent explorations:

*Take the cable car to Truc Lam Zen Monastery:* Enjoy a bird’s-eye-view of Dalat and Tuyen Lam Lake en route to a local monastery, where you’ll find an abundant display of natural and architectural delights. How to get there: A 10- to 15-minute taxi ride, about \$2 USD, and a 15-minute cable car ride. Hours: 7am-5pm, daily. Cost: About \$3 USD.

*Marvel at embroidery at XQ Village:* See how local artisans create what look at first blush like detailed paintings, but are actually incredibly refined examples of embroidery. How to get there: A 15- to 20-minute taxi ride, about \$4 USD. Hours: 8am-5pm, daily. Cost: About

\$5 USD.

*Discover Vietnamese finger painting:* Visit the studio of famed local artist Vo Trinh Bien, and learn how he uses his fingers as brushes to create lush landscapes, modern art, and more. How to get there: A 5- to 10-minute taxi ride, about \$2 USD. Hours: 8am-9pm, daily. Cost: About \$10 USD.

### **Day 16 – Dalat / Optional Dalat Agricultural Tour / University Student Discussion**

Activity Note: We'll drive over bumpy, uneven, dirt roads on our way to Buon Chuoi Village during this morning's Optional Tour.

Morning: The morning is free to explore the city as you'd like. Perhaps you'll behold the "Crazy House," a guesthouse with a whimsical and abstract design. You may prefer more natural wonders, in which case you can stroll through the elaborate Dalat Flower Gardens. Your Trip Experience Leader can provide recommendations that suit your interests.

Or, at 8am, you are welcome to join a 6-hour Optional Tour focusing on Dalat's agricultural production and village life. Boarding our bus for a 20-minute ride, we'll first visit a market garden, where we'll learn about the flowers grown in this region, before continuing on to a local coffee plantation. Here we'll get an introduction to weasel coffee—a close cousin to civet coffee, it's

expensive, highly coveted, and somewhat controversial among Western coffee connoisseurs. We'll have a chance to sample this coffee before a local family invites us into their home where we'll have the chance to enjoy more weasel coffee. At about 10:30am, we'll take a 20-minute ride to the isolated traditional village of Buon Chuoi (Banana Village). The village chief will greet us upon arrival just before 11am and we'll have some time to explore the village. We'll meet members of this hill tribe and learn about their subsistence farming practices, and they'll give us glimpses into their home lives. Then, we'll sit down with the chief to discuss the impacts government policies are having on local hill tribes. We'll spend about an hour in the village, before we board our bus just after 12pm and drive back to Dalat.

Lunch: If you haven't joined today's Optional Tour, lunch is on your own. You're free to seek out a restaurant, or perhaps try one of Dalat's popular street foods, *bánh tráng kẹp* (grilled egg, pork, and shrimp on rice paper). Your Trip Experience Leader can tell you where to find this "Vietnamese pizza." Travelers on our Optional Tour will enjoy lunch at a local restaurant in Dalat around 1pm.

Afternoon: Those who joined our Optional Tour will continue their drive back to the hotel, arriving around 2:30pm. Then, around 4pm we'll gather as a group at the hotel for a short, 15-minute bus ride to Dalat University, where we'll have the chance to meet with some of its





students. Admittance into one of Vietnam’s colleges and universities requires successfully passing a prestigious entrance examination, and the pressure on students is high: On average, only one in five Vietnamese high school students passes the test. Our candid conversation will give us the chance to learn about Vietnam’s next generation in their own words.

Around 6pm, we’ll depart by bus for 10 minutes to dinner.

Dinner: Around 6:15pm at a local restaurant, featuring traditional cuisine.

Evening: On your own. You’re free to return to the hotel to pack and rest up before tomorrow’s travel to Ho Chi Minh City, or venture out for a last bit of exploration here in Dalat. Perhaps you’ll go to Dalat Market to explore its vibrant night market scene, where street food stands beckon with a tantalizing assortment of scents, accompanied by the sound of sizzling pots and pans. Your Trip Experience Leader can recommend a few dishes to try while you’re there.

Dalat Agricultural Tour - \$70/person: Dalat is an area of rich agricultural production in the central highlands. Visit a market garden on this optional tour, and learn about members of the isolated Chil tribe, who practice subsistence farming high on a hilltop. We’ll also learn

about the unusual process of creating “weasel coffee” and ride a unique local mode of transportation. This tour includes lunch at a local restaurant.

### **Day 17 – Fly to Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon) / Motorbike Excursion**

Activity Note: We’ll rise around 5am today so we have plenty of time to grab breakfast and finish packing before we depart our hotel and drive to the airport.

Morning: Our morning starts slightly earlier than normal today, as we’ll check out of our hotel and board our bus around 7am. We’ll drive for about one hour to the airport, and then check in for a 30-minute flight to the southernmost point of our adventure, Ho Chi Minh City. Landing shortly before 10am, we’ll transfer to our bus, drive about 40 minutes into the city, and dive into our explorations with an included city tour.

Formerly known as Saigon, Ho Chi Minh City is now a modern seaport and Vietnam’s largest city. During our 30-minute tour, we’ll see the city’s long and complex history on full display: Centuries’ old Buddhist temples and buildings built by French colonists. Continuing on, we’ll see the Catholic Cathedral of Notre Dame, completed in 1880 and said to stand on the site of an old pagoda. We’ll continue on to witness the majestic Post Office—also built in the late 19th century, it features a pair of enormous murals with maps of Vietnam as it

was years ago. We will then drive by the former U.S. Embassy, an iconic Vietnam War site.

**Lunch:** Around noon, at a local noodle soup restaurant. Rich and flavorful, pho (noodle soup) is Vietnam's national dish, having originated in the north and spread across the nation. It's considered a homey comfort food here, and locals note that different regions add their own nuances to the dish.

**Afternoon:** At about 1pm, we'll drive 10 minutes to our hotel. Upon arrival, we'll check in and receive our room assignments. Depending on where we stay, our hotel may feature an on-site restaurant, fitness center, and bar. Your room is most likely equipped with a TV, wireless Internet access, a safe, and private bathroom. You'll have about 4.5 hours on your own this afternoon—perhaps you'll venture out to the nearby Ben Thanh market. You may also visit the War Remnant Museum. The North Vietnamese captured this city on April 30, 1975, and as you'll see the artillery and armor collection, you'll gain more northern insights into the "American War."

We'll regroup at about 5:30pm for an orientation walk around the neighborhood, and we'll walk to a nearby restaurant.

**Dinner:** Around 6pm at a local restaurant, featuring regional cuisine.

**Evening:** Around 7:15pm, we'll drive about 30 minutes back to the hotel where you have the freedom to spend the evening as you wish. You may choose to enjoy a beverage at the hotel's bar, retire to your room, or ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations on exploring Ho Chi Minh City independently.

**Freedom to Explore:** During your three days in Ho Chi Minh City, you have the freedom to explore the city on your own during your free time. Below are some recommended options for independent explorations:

*Take a cooking class at Koto Foundation:* Try your hand at preparing (and eating) the local cuisine during a 3.5-hour class at this charitable organization. How to get there: A 15- to 20-minute walk. Hours: Opens at 8:30am, daily. Cost: About \$65 USD.

*People-watch in Tan Dan Park:* Say good morning to Ho Chi Minh City with an early-morning stroll, witnessing morning exercises, sports, and even a bird-singing competition. How to get there: A 25- to 30-minute walk. Hours: Opens at 6am, daily. Cost: Free.

*Embark on a scooter city tour:* Experience even more of Ho Chi Minh City by motorbike as your driver-guide shares their personal insights and experiences. How to get there: Driver-guide will meet you at the hotel lobby. Hours: Starts at 9am, daily. Cost: About \$45 USD.





### **Day 18 – Overland to the Mekong Delta / Sampan Ride / Local Interaction**

Activity Note: Today’s sampan ride will require agility while stepping in and out of the small wooden boats.

Morning: Boarding our bus at 8am, we’ll embark on a journey out of Ho Chi Minh City to discover Vietnam’s famous Mekong Delta. Throughout the day, our Trip Experience Leader will facilitate interactions with many of the local people who earn their livelihood from the maze of rivers, islands, and floating markets of this fertile region often referred to as “Vietnam’s rice bowl.”

We’ll drive 1.5 hours to the boat station where we’ll board a motorized boat and cruise for about 30 minutes to the picturesque province of Ben Tre. Upon arrival around 10:30am, we’ll enjoy a brief walk through Ben Tre village, famous for its coconut plantations. The village is laced with canals, with bankside vegetation forming archways over the water. One of the best ways to see the village is by sampan, traditional flat-bottomed wooden boats, and we’ll step aboard one for a 10-15 minute canal cruise. Then just before 10:45am, we’ll take a motorized boat to a farming village where we’ll meet with a local family who will provide an authentic glimpse into daily life in this region. They’ll show us around their orchard, and we’ll have the opportunity to try some of the fruits that are cultivated here, such as mango and pomelo, a citrus fruit. Then, we’ll explore the village further aboard lambros, small three-wheeled vehicles that are typical transportation here.

Lunch: Around noon at a local restaurant.

Afternoon: Around 1pm, we’ll continue our discoveries during a visit to a coconut candy workshop, where a local villager will show us how to make the sweet keo dua. Around 1:45pm, we’ll board our motorized boat and cruise back to our pier, arriving around 2pm to board our bus for the 2-hour ride back to Ho Chi Minh City. We’ll reach our hotel at about 4pm. The rest of the afternoon is yours, with the freedom to enjoy the hotel’s common areas, relax in your room, or venture out into the city. Perhaps you’ll visit Reunification Palace, where the Vietnam War formally ended.

Dinner: On your own—your Trip Experience Leader can provide recommendations on the best locales for whatever your preferences are. Perhaps you’ll try a local favorite—such as bahn tam bi, thick tapioca noodles served with pickled vegetables, pork sausage, a meatball, and a dense coconut sauce.

Evening: On your own. You’re free to stay on the hotel grounds tonight, or you may choose to see a performance at the nearby Opera House, or even stroll along the expansive and popular Nguyen Hue Boulevard.

### **Day 19 – Explore the Cu Chi Tunnels / Viet Cong Veterans Discussion**

Activity Note: Today we’ll travel a total of about three hours aboard our bus, over bumpy and uneven roads. Our exploration of the Cu Chi Tunnels can also be a powerful,

emotional experience for many travelers, as it involves small, narrow tunnelways—requiring agility—and addresses a raw and complex period of history.

**Morning:** We gather and board our bus at 8am this morning, for a 1.5-hour ride northwest to the village of Cu Chi—the namesake for a vast network of tunnels that stretch for more than 125 miles. During the Vietnam War, these tunnels allowed the Viet Cong to control a large area near the former Saigon. But they were so much more than a means of transport: Soldiers and local civilians alike took to the tunnels as aerial bombing raged overhead, and there they lived, with homes, kitchens, medical facilities, and more.

We'll arrive at Cu Chi around 9:30am and begin our 1-hour tour of the tunnels. Today's discoveries often prove to be an especially emotional experience—while many American visitors are aware of the tunnels, they don't realize how many people lived in them during the war. As we explore the rough-hewn passageways and see the community spaces, we'll gain invaluable insight into the war. Plus, thanks to our small group size, we'll benefit from a unique glimpse of the site, as we explore an area of the tunnels most tourists don't typically visit.

Around 11am, we'll transfer 10 minutes to a local home for lunch.

**Lunch:** At about 11:15am, a local family will welcome us into their home, where we'll have the opportunity to dine and chat with war veterans who fought with the Viet Cong. This is a great chance to ask questions about what we've just seen within the tunnels, and hear more about the war from their perspective.

**Afternoon:** We'll return to our bus at about 12:45pm, for the 1.5-hour ride back to Ho Chi Minh City. After we reach our hotel, the rest of the afternoon is yours. You're free to gather with your fellow travelers to discuss the thoughts and emotions prompted by today's Cu Chi excursion, spend some time quietly reflecting on the day, or venture out into the city.

We'll regroup around 6pm, and walk to a nearby restaurant.

**Dinner:** Around 6:15pm, we'll gather for our Farewell Dinner at a local restaurant. As we toast to the experiences and discoveries we've shared, our meal will include an appetizer, main course, and dessert. Bottled water, soft drinks, and a glass of beer or wine are included.

**Evening:** On your own—with freedom for you to enjoy your final night in Ho Chi Minh City as you'd like. If you're interested in venturing out for exploration, your Trip Experience Leader will be ready to provide their recommendations.

## **Day 20 – Return to the U.S.**





## Pricing Summary & Trip Dates

**Trip Name:** Inside Vietnam  
**Trip Dates:** Aug. 22 - Sept. 10, 2022  
**Trip Prices:** \$1,995  
**Airfare from Detroit (DTW):** \$1,500

**Travel Protection:** Not required but is highly recommended. For details, please call Curtis Whitaker at (269) 209-5889.

**Reservation Deposit:** The deposit to reserve your space on this trip is \$350 per person fully refundable until 65 days prior to departure. Remaining balance due 90 days before departure.

**Lower Price Note:** For safety and health reasons, the “Inside Vietnam” trip originally scheduled for 2021 has been rescheduled to 2022. The overall price (trip + airfare) is now \$600 lower. If you paid the higher price for the planned 2021 trip, that \$600 will be refunded to you or offered as a credit toward the 2022 Vietnam trip.

**Need Help?** For personal assistance or more information about this trip in the meantime, please call Curtis Whitaker at (269) 209-5889.

## TOUR RESERVATION POLICY:

Reservations can be made by calling Curtis Whitaker at (269) 209-5889. A \$350 deposit is required to guarantee your place (credit cards accepted). Remaining balance due 90 days before departure.

**Note:** The information, dates and prices provided in this document are estimates only based on currently available information. Pricing and itinerary are subject to change.

**Pricing Disclaimer:** Every effort will be made to provide accurate pricing information. Operator reserves the right to correct promotional or pricing errors at any time, or to increase the trip price in the event of cost increases due to changes in airfares, cruise fares, currency fluctuations, venue fee increases, taxes, or fuel surcharges, or other reasons, unless you pre-paid according to the terms of the Good Buy Plan prior to the cost increase going into effect. For more information, please call Curtis Whitaker at (269) 209-5889.