

# The Best of Vietnam & Cambodia

## 17 day tour to HCMC, Da Nang, Hoi An, Ha Long Bay Cruise, Hanoi, Siem Reap & Phnom Penh,

Discover the historic cities, verdant agriculture, and glittering bays of Vietnam and be captivated by the warmth of the people you meet. Uncover the youthful excitement of Saigon, explore beautiful Mekong Delta; learn about the Cu Chi tunnels, wander around the world famous Golden Bridge; shop at the living museum city of Hoi An; float across Halong Bay on boat and enjoy the unique pedi-cab ride in the old quarter in Hanoi; then explore the UNESCO heritage of Angkor Wat and the unique floating village on the Tonle Sap Lake in Siem Reap, followed by visit to Phnom Penh, the largest city in Cambodia....

### Day 1 Australia ✈ HCMC (Saigon)

Fly from Australia to Ho Chi Minh City, formally called Saigon, the economic and commercial center of Vietnam. Overnight in HCMC.

### Day 2 Ho Chi Minh City Meal: B/L/D

This morning, we head to Cu Chi, 70km north of Saigon, which is famous for its 200-kilometre-long tunnels and it was the base for the Viet Cong during the Vietnam War. After lunch, return to Ho Chi Minh City, the war theme continues with photo stop at the Independence Palace and visit to the War Remnant Museum and wandering around Cho Ben Thanh Markets.

### Day 3 Mekong Delta Meal: B/L/D

Enjoy a full-day excursion to My Tho, 75km south of Saigon, a peaceful town on the bank of the Mekong River. The tour comprises a cruise on the Mekong River, a visit to orchards and local homes, a sampan ride on palm-shaded creeks, a taste of seasonal fruit & honey tea and a performance of traditional southern singing. Lunch of Mekong specialties is arranged.

### Day 4 Ho Chi Minh City ✈ Hoi An Meal: B/L/D

Transfer to the airport for our flight to Da Nang. Upon arrival, we visit World famous floating Golden Bridge that is seemingly held up by a pair of giant stone hands. Take in panoramic views of Da Nang from this impressive Bridge then followed by riding cable car – one of the longest in the world – over the lush Ba Na forest. Continue our drive to Hoi An, the most charming town in Vietnam. Here we stay 3 nights.

### Day 5 Hoi An Meal: B/L/D

Today your guide will show you the ancient town. Hoi An, is so called a 'living Museum City' because of its well-kept original historical buildings and ancient backstreets. Visit one of the three city's oldest homes, each built over 200 years ago and still occupied by descendants of the families that originally built them. We then tour to the Chinese Assembly Hall, followed by a one hour cruise

along the river. Later on we visit to the unique Japanese Bridge; afterwards we take one hour cruise along Thu the Bon River. Lunch is served at a local restaurant by the river.

### Day 6 Hoi An Meal: B

Today is at leisure to explore more of Hoi An at your own pace, possibly to do some shopping, get some tailor-made clothes, walk around the charming town or just relax in the pool at your hotel.

### Day 7 Hoi An ⇄ Da Nang ✈ Hanoi Meal: B/D

After breakfast, transfer to Da Nang airport for your flight to Hanoi, Vietnam's capital city which boasts tree-lined streets and centuries-old temples. Transfer to your hotel.

### Day 8 Hanoi Meal: B/L/D

We visit Tran Quoc pagoda, a Buddhist temple set on a West Lake peninsula; then continue to the Ho Chi Minh complex and the One Pillar pagoda. Explore Confucian heritage at the 11th-century Temple of Literature, where you'll find a prime example of traditional Vietnamese architecture, and the site of Vietnam's first university. Afternoon, pay a visit to the Hoa Lo Prison, nicknamed Hanoi Hilton by American pilots during the Vietnam War. This notorious prison was used by French Colonists for political prisoners until the mid-1950s. Your expert guide will share stories and history as you tour the grounds. After that, visit Vietnam Museum of Ethnology to learn about the 54 cultural groups living in Vietnam. Then take the 1 hour cyclo tour around the Old quarter before get back to your hotel.

### Day 9 Ha Long Bay Cruise Meal: B/L/D

This morning we depart from Ha Noi and travel by road with cruise shuttle bus through the Red River Delta to the beautiful Ha Long Bay. The scenic drive will pass through rural landscapes before arriving at this World Heritage site, recognised by UNESCO in 1994. Upon arrival board the deluxe Junk Boat where you will enjoy a welcome drink and freshly caught seafood lunch whilst sailing out of the bay passing amazing shaped mountains. You will also visit some magical grottoes and relax in the best scenic beauty Vietnam has to offer. You could also do Kayaking or local boat rowing, attend a morning Tai chi class or Cooking demonstration, Squid Fishing, or a movie show. Overnight on the cruise.

### Day 10 Ha Long Bay ⇄ Hanoi Meal: B/L/D

This morning start with optional early morning Tai Chi class then continue our visit to some of the caves or a pearl farm in Ha Long Bay. After early lunch served on board, you are transferred back to Hanoi with cruise shuttle bus. Overnight in Hanoi.

### Day 11 Hanoi ✈ Siem Reap Meal: B

Fly from Hanoi to Siem Reap. Upon arrival Siem Reap International Airport, met & greet by our professional guide who will introduce you briefly history, culture and various aspects of Cambodia; then transfer to hotel for check-in. Overnight at hotel in Siem Reap.

### Day 12 Siem Reap Meal: B/L/D

Morning transfer to South Gate of Angkor Thom, visit Bayon Temple located at the centre of Angkor Thom City. It is known for the 216 giant mysterious faces

carve on the 54 towers, each posing a differing mysterious smile, keeping watch of each compass point. After lunch; visit one of the most popular temples of the Angkor Complex Angkor Wat Temple and surrounding sites. This is the largest temple complex in the world, a marvel of art and architecture of both Hindu and Buddhist. Enjoy the Sunset view from the top of Pre Rup-temple. Dinner with Apsara dancing show served at local restaurant. Overnight at hotel in Siem Reap.

### **Day 17 Australia**

Arrive into Australia in the morning.

### **Day 13 Siem Reap**

**Meal: B/L**

This morning visit Kbal Spean, 1000 Lingas River and its waterfall; which is well known with its spectacularly carved riverbed, set deep in the jungle to the northeast of Angkor. Next stop at Banteay Srei, the temple made of pink sandstone and it is one of the smallest temple you can visit but one of the most beautiful as well. Built in 967 AD by a guru to Jayavarman V, it showcases the most exquisite, deep and complex carvings in all Khmer architecture. As well the carvings and bas relief are in a perfect condition although being here for more than millenary. After lunch continue to visit the Phnom Krom village and Tonle Sap Lake. Along the way visit the Lotus farm; followed by the floating village on Tonle Sap Lake by boat. Cambodia's Great Lake is one of the geographical wonders of the world. Its extraordinary biodiversity and hydrology make it an ecological wonder of the world.

### **Day 14 Siem Reap - Phnom Penh**

**Meal: B**

Visit Banteay Kdei, royal pool of Sras Srang and the overgrown Temple of Ta Prohm. Unlike most of the temples of Angkor, Ta Prohm has been largely left to the clutches of the living jungle which shows the dynamic interaction between nature and man-made art. After lunch (at your own expenses), you are transferred to Siem Reap international airport for your flight to Phnom Penh. Upon arrival you will be welcomed by local guide and transfer to hotel for check in. Overnight at hotel in Phnom Penh.

### **Day 15 Phnom Penh**

**Meal: B/D**

In the morning visit the Royal Palace - Silver Pagoda, home to the Cambodian royal family and a symbol of the nation. Seeing the Napoleon III Pavilion made from iron, a gift from the French emperor in the 19th century and continue to the Silver Pagoda, named after the 5000 silver tiles covering the floor, each weighing 1kg. Then visit the National Museum, home to the world's finest collection of sculpture from the Angkor period. Afternoon visit the Genocide Museum "Tuol Sleng", which is a former high school used as the notorious Security Prison 21 (S-21) and learn about Cambodia's tumultuous past before going to the Killing Field "Cheoung Ek". Stop at Russian Market for a quick shopping for local handicraft products.

Evening enjoy 1 hour sunset on Mekong Lake. Dinner served at local restaurant.

Overnight at hotel in Phnom Penh.

### **Day 16 Phnom Penh ✈ Australia**

**Meal: B**

This morning is at leisure. In time you are transferred to the airport for your overnight flight to Australia via Saigon.