

Discover Vietnam

Feb. 23 – Mar. 8, 2015

Feb 23

Day 1. Hanoi

After clearing immigration and customs, you will be met and transferred to the hotel. There will be an orientation meeting either at the hotel or the dinner restaurant.

Hotel: Church Boutique on Hang Trong for 2 nights

Meals: Dinner

Feb 24

Day 2. Hanoi

Today starts with a visit to Hoan Kiem Lake, the heartbeat of Hanoi, followed by a cyclo tour of the maze-like warren known as the Old Quarter. After lunch, visit the Presidential Palace, the Ho Chi Minh Stilt House, the One Pillar Pagoda and the Ho Chi Minh Museum.

Hotel: Church Boutique on Hang Trong

Meals: Breakfast, lunch and dinner

Feb 25

Day 3. Hanoi – Halong Bay

An early start to drive through the rice-paddy dotted Red River Delta to Halong Bay. Once there, board a luxury Chinese-style junk for an overnight excursion among the thousands of limestone formations that create this spectacular seascape.

Overnight on junk

Meals: Breakfast, lunch and dinner

Feb 26

Day 4. Halong Bay – Hanoi

Spend the morning exploring more of this ethereal landscape before returning to Hanoi. Stop en route at the Phu Lang ceramic village

Hotel: Check back into Church Boutique on Hang Trong for 2 nights

Meals: Breakfast, lunch and dinner

Feb 27

Day 5. Hanoi

After breakfast, tour the state-of-the-art Museum of Ethnic Minorities, which celebrates the multi-ethnic and cultural diversity of Vietnam. After lunch, visit the Temple of Literature, the Fine Arts Museum and enjoy the pre-dinner performance of the acclaimed Thanh Long Water Puppets.

Hotel: Church Boutique on Hang Trong

Meals: Breakfast, lunch and dinner

Feb 28

Day 6. Hanoi – Mai Chau

Drive through verdant valleys, past sugarcane farms at Mai Chau, gateway to the stunning mountains of Northern Vietnam and a world away from the hustle and bustle of Hanoi. Enjoy an afternoon stroll among the rice paddies and minority villages in this gorgeous valley.

Hotel: Mai Chau EcoLodge

Meals: Breakfast, lunch en route and dinner at the EcoLodge

Mar 1

Day 7. Mai Chau – Hanoi – Hoi An

Drop in at the Pa Co Sunday market, the place where locals, mostly minority H'Mong, come to trade food, traditional-style brocade clothing and novelty goods. After lunch, drive back to Hanoi for a late afternoon flight to Hoi An.

Hotel: Vinh Hung Riverside Resort for 4 nights

Meals: Breakfast and lunch

Mar 2

Day 8. Hoi An

This morning, tour the local market to learn about the vegetables, spices, meat and fish you will prepare - and then eat - at the Red Bridge cooking school. The afternoon is free to explore the many art galleries and tailor shops, where custom made clothes can be sewn in just a few hours.

Hotel: Vinh Hung Riverside Resort

Meals: Breakfast, lunch at the Red Bridge and dinner

Mar 3

Day 9. Hoi An

Rise early to visit the ruins of My Son, the 16th century Cham Holyland that is Vietnam's equivalent of Angkor Wat. This afternoon, take a short tour of Hoi An Old Quarter, seeing ancient trading houses, Chinese assembly halls and a traditional music concert.

Hotel: Vinh Hung Riverside Resort

Meals: Breakfast and dinner

Mar 4

Day 10. Hoi An

Today's eco-tour offers a hands-on cultural window into the daily life of local fishermen and farmers. Learn to paddle a coracle, a small oval shaped fishing boat woven from bamboo, to catch fish the way the locals do and how the military used the Coconut Water Palm Canal during the Vietnam War. The rest of the day is free.

Hotel: Vinh Hung Riverside Resort

Meals: Breakfast, lunch and dinner

Mar 5

Day 11. Hoi An– Hue

After breakfast, drive along the scenic coastal highway to Hue, the former Imperial Capital of Vietnam, stopping en route at China Beach, the Cham Museum and Lang Co Beach.

Hotel: Saigon Morin for 2 nights

Meals: Breakfast, lunch at seafood restaurant in Lang Co beach, dinner

Mar 6

Day 12. Hue

Board a traditional dragon boat for a short trip on the Perfume River. See the iconic Thien Mu Pagoda, tour the Imperial Citadel, a UNESCO World Heritage site modeled on Beijing's Forbidden City, and visit the mausoleums of Emperors Tu Duc and Khai Dinh.

Hotel: Saigon Morin

Meals: Breakfast, lunch and dinner

Mar 7

Day 13. Hue – Hanoi

This morning, fly back to Hanoi. Rest of day is free until farewell banquet at one of Vietnam's most elegant restaurants.

Hotel: Church Boutique on Hang Trong

Meals: Breakfast and dinner

Mar 8

Day 14. Homeward bound

After breakfast, transfer to the airport for flights back home or on to your next destination.