

2010 Highlights of Vietnam - Classic

10 days / 9 nights

Highlights

Saigon, Cu Chi Tunnels, Mekong Delta, Hue, China Beach, Hoi An, Hanoi's Old Quarter, Halong Bay

Highlights of Vietnam - Classic

Vietnam's treasures are as unique as they are captivating, and you will be introduced to something different every day on our 'Highlights of Vietnam.' Fly between major centres on this journey to make the most of your experience, and enjoy time to relax in the country's best cafés, indulge in fantastic market shopping, and dine on some of the best food in Asia.

The quality of accommodation is a real highlight of this trip. Hotels are centrally located, three to four-star with private, western style bathrooms, air-conditioning and swimming pools (except in Hanoi).

All road travel is in comfortable minibuses or mid-sized coaches. Your journey is escorted by both a Western tour leader, based on a minimum of seven travellers, and a local English-speaking guide in each location. Groups are never more than 16 travellers in size.

Tour grading - EASY

Suitable for travellers with an average level of fitness and independent mobility. The tour involves walking over uneven surfaces and climbing stairs, in the heat. There are two domestic flights and rides on a cyclo (Vietnamese pedi-cab) and several small boats. You will need to be able to board and disembark boats independently, sometimes between muddy or slippery banks. There are some long road journeys (up to four hours).

While accommodation is three to four-star, this is not 'sanitised' travel; by day you will walk through markets and villages, meet local people, and sample local food.

What's Included

- Nine nights accommodation
- Breakfast daily and two lunches
- All transfers and road transport in modern, air-conditioned vehicles
- Two domestic flights
- All sightseeing as specified including entrance fees
- Expert Western tour leader (group size seven minimum) and local guides throughout
- Tour arrival and departure transfers

Climate

The 'Highlights of Vietnam' can be enjoyed at any time of the year. In general, North Vietnam experiences two seasons; summer and winter. Summers are dry and warm, averaging 25-33°C. Winters (October to March) can be cool with temperatures in Hanoi averaging 10-20°C in January. Some winter months experience a light, drizzling rain. In Central and South Vietnam, the 'dry' season runs from November to May. Temperatures average between 22-30°C. The 'wet' season is characterised by a brief shower late in the afternoon with temperatures from 25-33°C.

Itinerary

Day 1 - Arrive Saigon

Upon arrival in Saigon you will be met and transferred to your hotel. Tonight meet your tour leader (or local guide) for welcome drinks and a tour briefing.

Three nights DUXTON HOTEL

Day 2 - Saigon

See the sights of old and new Saigon in the central 'French quarter' and the Chinatown district, then visit Cu Chi Tunnels.

Day 3 - Mekong Delta

Explore the Mekong Delta's canals, orchards and towns by boat and interact with the friendly locals.

Day 4 - Saigon to Hoi An

Fly to Danang and drive south to nearby Hoi An. Enjoy the architecture, local delicacies and friendly locals that make Hoi An a true Vietnam highlight.

Two nights HOI AN RIVERSIDE RESORT & SPA

Day 5 - Hoi An

Today is at leisure to enjoy Hoi An with its many galleries, tailor shops and restaurants.

Day 6 - Hoi An to Hue

Drive north along the dramatic coastal road at Hai Van Pass to Vietnam's former imperial capital, Hue, and Wander the last empire's Forbidden City - the Citadel, as well as the banks of the Perfume River.

One night HUONG GIANG HOTEL

Day 7 - Hue to Halong bay

Visit the tombs of the former Nguyen Dynasty Emperors before you fly to Hanoi. On arrival, transfer to Halong City.

One night HALONG PLAZA HOTEL

Day 8 - Halong Bay to Hanoi

Spend the morning cruising the spectacular Halong Bay, with its thousands of limestone islets that rise out of the sea, as you enjoy a sumptuous seafood lunch onboard. In the afternoon journey to Hanoi before an evening theatrical water puppet performance.

Two nights MAISON D'HANOI HANOVA HOTEL

Day 9 - Hanoi

Discover the Old Quarter by cyclo, then explore Hanoi with visits to historic Ba Dinh Square, the infamous Hoa Lo (Hanoi Hilton) prison and the peaceful Temple of Literature, then, the remainder of the day is at leisure.

Day 10 - Depart Hanoi

Today you will be transferred to the airport for your onward journey.

Information in this dossier was correct at the time of its preparation.

Travel Indochina reserves the right to make itinerary changes as operational or other circumstances require.

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Hotel Brief

Duxton Hotel in Saigon

Fantastic location, very good service and facilities including pool. A comfortable, internationally managed four-star property.

Hoi An Riverside Resort & Spa

Located between the beach and Ancient Town, this 3-4 star boutique property has great facilities including pool and is a favourite with our travellers.

Huong Giang Hotel in Hue

Set on the banks of the Perfume River, this comfortable hotel is just a short stroll from Hue's tourist centre. The pool makes for a lovely respite during summer months.

Halong Plaza Hotel in Halong City

Located on the edge of town and one of the better options in Halong City. Very comfortable with reasonable facilities including pool, Three to four-star.

Maison D'Hanoi Hanova Hotel

Very comfortable rooms, good service and facilities at this new, boutique property. Unbeatable location, three to four-star.

Visa Requirements

All persons entering Vietnam require a visa. Travellers need a tourist visa which cannot be issued on arrival so must be obtained before arrival. Please note normal tourist visas are valid for single entry only. More detailed visa information is available in our pre-departure information. It is your responsibility to make sure that visa requirements are fulfilled.

Health Issues

Good medical advice usually recommends vaccinations/prophylactics in advance of travel to Vietnam. We suggest that you consult with your doctor to discuss health care needs specific to your holiday.

Insurance

You must be comprehensively insured as a condition of travelling with Travel Indochina. Insurance should include cover for personal accident and medical expenses, evacuation and repatriation, baggage loss, and cancellation or curtailment of your holiday. Your booking will not be confirmed if you cannot confirm possession of appropriate insurance, and our ground operations have the right to prevent you from travelling in the event that you cannot present your insurance details at the start of the tour. Your travel agent can organise travel insurance for you.

Recommended Reading

- River of Time - Jon Swain
- World Food Vietnam - Richard Sterling
- A Bright Shining Lie - Neil Sheehan
- Ho Chi Minh - William J. Duiker
- Shadows and Wind - Robert Templer
- The Sorrow of War: A Novel of North Vietnam - Bao Ninh

A Responsible Travel Indochina

Travel Indochina practices a thorough, realistic Responsible Travel Policy, full details of which can be found in our website. Our policy includes our downloadable 'Tread Lightly' booklet, full of useful pointers which will make you a more 'responsible' traveller in Asia.

Pre and post tour arrangements

If you would like to book pre or post tour hotel arrangements or are interested in doing additional quality touring before or after your Small Group journey, either contact Travel Indochina or your local travel agent.

What next

Once your booking has been confirmed and you have paid in full you will receive a detailed itinerary for this tour, detailing day by day arrangements, as well as a pre-departure guide containing valuable information designed to help you get the most out of your holiday.

About Travel Indochina

Travel Indochina has been operating small group journeys to Asia since 1993. Based in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, our idea is simple - escape the tourist traps to explore the essence of Asia's history, culture, natural beauty and most importantly, Asia's people. Another feature is the quality, character and location of our accommodation. Our travellers enjoy the combination of well thought out itineraries, tasteful accommodation, insightful western and local leaders, value for money, and our experience and base in the region.

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