

## Highlights of Vietnam – September 29 – October 10, 2018



**Viet Vietnam in one fascinating trip: the cities of Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh and the monolithic islands of Halong Bay.**

### Itinerary



Travel to Asia often requires an overnight flight. Flights to arrive before Day 1.

### **Day 1 Arrive in Hanoi (2 Nights)**

Welcome to Vietnam. Upon arrival, transfer to your hotel before meeting your Travel Director and fellow travelers for a Welcome Reception with drinks and local appetizers. **(WR)** *Hotel: Melia Hanoi*

### **Day 2 Hanoi Sightseeing**

Start the day with a visit to the historic Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum, an imposing monument where the preserved body of “Uncle Ho” resides. A short walk to the Temple of Literature, the first university for the sons of Mandarins, for an overview of Hanoian culture. After lunch enjoy a walking tour through the Old Quarter to embrace the bustling local life. The evening is at your leisure. **(BB, L)**

### **Day 3 Hanoi – Halong Bay Cruise**

This morning, drive through green rice paddy fields to Halong Bay to board your traditional Vietnamese Junk sailing boat. Cruise among the hundreds of islets of Halong Bay, a remarkable UNESCO World Heritage listed site. After lunch visit the Tien Ong Cave and Cua Van Fishing Village, where the people live in floating houses. Head back to the boat and participate in a demonstration with the chef or enjoy the sunset on the deck before dinner and a peaceful overnight stay. **(BB, L, D)** *Hotel: Jasmine Cruise*

### **Day 4 Halong Bay – Hanoi – Danang – Hoi An (3 nights)**

Begin your day as the locals do during a morning T'ai Chi class with a local specialist, on board of the traditional Junk boat. Then, enjoy an early swim at a natural white sandy beach. If you are feeling energetic, take an uphill walk to have one last view of scenic Halong Bay before you drive to Hanoi airport to catch your flight to Danang. On arrival transfer to your hotel in Hoi An. **(BB)** *Hotel: Royal Hoi An*

### **Day 5 Hoi An Sightseeing**

This morning enjoy a walking tour around the ancient town of Hoi An. Today this ancient UNESCO World Heritage designated town boasts well-preserved buildings, pedestrian streets, narrow lanes and a colorful market. See the old merchant houses and the 400 year old Japanese Covered

Bridge. Later visit Tra Que Organic Village. Here, spend some time helping local farmers and learning about their daily working routines, before indulging in a relaxing foot massage. After lunch, return to Hoi An for the rest of the day at your leisure. **(BB, L)**

### **Day 6 Hoi An**

This morning enjoy some free time to relax at the hotel or explore Hoi An further. In the afternoon choose from two cultural opportunities. Join a Lantern Making Workshop or a Fishing Life Tour (weather permitting) to learn about the lives of the local fishermen and have a go at casting your own fishing net. **(BB)**

### **Day 7 Hoi An- Hue (2 Nights)**

This morning depart Hoi An by boat to the Red Bridge Cooking School to learn about the traditional ways of preparing and cooking Vietnamese food. Then savor the dishes you have prepared before returning to Hoi An. This afternoon, drive over the picturesque Hai Van Pass stopping en-route at Red Beach where the American Marines first landed in Vietnam during the war. Continue to Danang for a visit to the Cham Museum before arriving in Hue for your overnight stay. **(BB, L)** *Hotel: Imperial*

### **Day 8 Hue Sightseeing**

Start from your hotel with a cyclo ride to the Imperial Citadel, a UNESCO World Heritage designated site. From here drive to Thien Mu Pagoda, Hue's best-preserved religious monument before taking a local dragon boat trip along the Perfume River to the house of the former Princess Ngoc Son for lunch. Chat with a family member to get a glimpse of their life in this historic house and enjoy a lunch prepared by the family. This afternoon enjoy some free time. **(BB, BG)**

### **Day 9 Hue – Ho Chi Minh City (3 nights)**

This morning, fly to Vietnam's largest metropolis, Ho Chi Minh City, formerly known as Saigon. Upon arrival enjoy some free time to stroll around the city before lunch at KOTO restaurant, a nonprofit social

enterprise that provides training to disadvantaged young people in the hospitality industry. Meet a senior staff member who will expand on their internship within the training program. Next, transfer to Dong Khoi Street for the start of a walking tour. See the Opera House and the former Hotel de Ville. Wander up to the Notre Dame Cathedral, and the Central post Office designed by the French architect Gustave Eiffel. Continue to visit the War Remnants Museum for a vivid glimpse of the war through the eyes of the locals. Conclude the day at Ben Thanh market before arriving at your hotel this evening. **(BB, L)** *Hotel: Sofitel Saigon Plaza*

### **Day 10 Mekong Delta**

Today take a day trip to My Tho situated in the Delta of the Mekong River. Transfer to a small sampan boat and discover the maze of canals before



stopping for a Regional Meal of delicious Mekong Delta specialties. Take a short walk along village roads to visit the house of a former soldier who survived fighting the Khmer Rouge. Now he and his wife live on making rice paper and have some fascinating stories to tell. Later

return to Ho Chi Minh City for an evening at leisure. **(BB, RM)**

### **Day 11 Ho Chi Minh City**

Today, travel by speedboat to visit the famous CuChi tunnels. Tour the underground compounds and gain an understanding of the history of the tunnels. Return to Ho Chi Minh City and enjoy some free time this afternoon. Later join your fellow travelers for a visit to the home of the former American Ambassador to South Vietnam in the 1960s, Mr. Henry Cabot Lodge, followed by your Farewell Dinner. **(BB, L, FD)**

### **Day 12 Depart Ho Chi Minh City**

This morning transfer to the airports for your onward flight. **(BB)**

***Your Included Sights:***



- City tour of **Hanoi, Hue, Hoi An** and **Ho Chi Minh City**
- Visit **Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum** and the **Temple of Literature** in Hanoi, the **Imperial Citadel** in Hue and the **War Remnants Museum** in Ho Chi Minh City
- Cruise around **Halong Bay** and along the **Perfume River** in Hue
- See **Red Beach** in Danang

***Your Insider Experiences:***

- **Be My Guest** lunch at the historic home of a local family in Hue.
- **Cultural Insight** Visit Ho Chi Minh's house, learn about the ancient Champa civilization, see the colorful market stands of Hoi An, visit the home of the former American Ambassador to South Vietnam.
- **Authentic Accommodation** on a traditional Vietnamese Junk boat in Halong bay.
- **Local Specialist** in Halong Bay and the Mekong Delta.
- **Hidden Treasure** Enjoy at least one surprise Hidden Treasure.

