

# THE MAJESTIC BEAUTY OF INDOCHINA 25 DAYS



Code: VCL25

Routes: Hanoi – Halong – Sapa – Hue – Hoi An – HCM City – Mekong – Phnompenh – Siem Reap – Luang Prabang

Duration: 25 Days / 24 Nights

Features: An experience in 3 countries in one trip of 25 days visiting the highlights of Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. Involving some easy sightseeing, traditional culture and interesting adventures, this is a trip of a lifetime.

## Day 1: Good morning Hanoi



Chao Ban! Welcome to Hanoi, we meet you at the airport and take you to your hotel for check-in. Today is free at your leisure to rest or explore, discovering your own first impressions of Vietnam (depending on what time you arrive). Overnight in Hanoi.

*Inclusion: Transfer, guide, hotel.*

## Day 2: Hanoi - village with bike



We pick you up at 8:30 AM for a short transfer outside of Hanoi, we have this morning to learn about Hanoi villages' life, its traditions, customs.

We walk and cycle along the villages, visiting local markets, some old houses, their worshipping temples, communal houses... then we have a small food demonstration before our lunch at one of the local family here.

In the afternoon, we set out from Dong Ngac, cycling on mostly rural lanes through surrounding villages to Lien Mac, a beautiful area of immaculately tended vegetables and flowers. Here you get a close-up look at the colorful fields and have the chance to chat with some of the local people out caring for their crops. After taking another route from Lien Mac back to Dong Ngac, you have a short break for a drink at your host family's home, bid your farewells, and catch the van back to your hotel in Hanoi at around 5:00 PM.

*Inclusion: Transfer, guide, entrance fees, breakfast, lunch, local bike, community development fund, hotel*



### Day 3: Hanoi - day trip to Trang An & Hoa Lu, night train to Lao Cai



Depart from your hotel at 8:00 AM to Ninh Binh, after 2.5 hour drive (about 100 km), we ride on the rowboat as soon as we arrive to Trang An world heritage site, this is a very beautiful boat ride in about 1,5 hours a meandering stream with towering limestone mountain peaks above and rowing through some limestone caves before our lunch served nearby.

We make a short transfer along the peaceful country road to Hoa Lu -here our guide takes you through this interesting history part of Vietnam's ancient capital in the 9th century, with stories of the two kings are now being worshiped there. We return to Hanoi in the late afternoon at around 6:00 PM. Dinner on your own.

At 8:30 AM transfer from a prearranged meeting spot to the station for your night train to Sapa. Boarding is at around 9:40 PM. You are in shared AC soft sleeper cabin to travel North to Lao Cai town.

*(Our tour guide shows you the mini hotel where you have basic shower and breakfast before going on Halong bay trip).*

*Inclusion:* Transfer, guide, entrance fee, breakfast, lunch, local rowboat, train ticket.

### Day 4: Lao Cai - Sapa, trek to Ta Phin



The night before at 8:30 PM, we meet you at your hotel for your transfer to the Tran Quy Cap train station for boarding at 9:40 PM. You share an AC soft sleeper cabin and travel North to Lao Cai town.

Today morning at around 6:30 AM, you are welcomed by our driver at the train station to transfer to Sapa. When you arrive in Sapa, you have a time for a short rest, hot shower and some breakfast before your inspiring trek. A short

transfer and we're off. Chances to meet and talk with locals working in the fields are plentiful. Picnic lunch en route then continue trekking to Ta Phin village – home of the Red Dao people. Your Dao host family warmly welcome you to their traditional home where we share in an ethnic style dinner and stay the night.

Trekking Distance: 14 km (4-5 hours)

Trail Difficulty: 4/5

*Inclusion:* Transfer, guide, morning shower, entrance fee, all meals, permit, homestay.

### Day 5: More in Ta Phin and back to Sapa



At the first gleam of daylight, you see and hear the sounds of morning village life. You can join your host family in some of their morning activities like feeding the animals, cleaning the houses, gardening or preparing breakfast. After breakfast, we take a short wander around the village or spend more time enjoying the view and company at the homestay. Then, you are supported by our car / van back to Sapa (30

minutes).

Back in Sapa, check in to your hotel, shower, rest and lunch on your own. At 2:30 PM, we take an easy walk to Cat Cat village, home of Black H'mong. Take part in a traditional musical performance. Back in Sapa for dinner and the evening on your own. Overnight here.

Trekking Distance: about 5 km

Trail Difficulty: 2/5

Note: The music show in Cat Cat village is closed on Tuesday afternoon. We arrange an alternative activity.

*Inclusion:* Transfer, guide, entrance fees, breakfast, music show ticket, hotel.

## Day 6: Sapa – night train back to Hanoi



Wake up in Sapa town, breakfast at the hotel then enjoy the morning activities in the town markets. Today your guide is available to you for the whole day, although you do have the option to enjoy the day on your own. Suggestions for today: visit the orchid gardens at Dragon Mountain or complete another day trek to a hill tribe village.

At 5:30 PM, transfer to the Lao Cai train station.

Departure is at 8:15 PM on an AC soft sleeper class cabin to Hanoi.

Trekking Distance: around 6 km (optional trek)

*Inclusion: Transfer, guide, train ticket, breakfast, entrance fee.*

## Day 7: Hanoi – Ha Long, welcome on boat



Safely back in Hanoi at 5:00 AM please find your way on foot back to a prearranged hotel near the train station. Shower, short rest and basic breakfast.

Departure for Ha Long Bay is around 8:00 AM in a shared van (about 4 hours) from your hotel. Arrive at the port around noon. Welcomed on board, you are taken to your cabin before the trip briefing.

You enjoy a fresh and local seafood lunch while cruising to explore the magic Bai Tu Long Bay. Stop for a swim and visit the mysterious cave. Relax at our secluded island-beach or explore by kayak. Later you return back to the boat just in time to watch the beautiful sunset from the top deck before enjoying the bay's freshest seafood dinner.

*Inclusion: Transfer, guide on boat, morning shower, entrance fee, kayak, boat / junk, all meals, permits.*



## Day 8: Explore Bai Tu Long bay, back to Hanoi



Early risers can enjoy the sunrise and the quiet breath-taking beauty of Bay's landscape with towering limestone. You have breakfast at around 8:00 AM before our short rowboat by the locals of the bay.

Lunch on the boat as we slowly cruise back to boat pier. Hit the road, stopping for a water puppet show at a traditional Vietnamese village

before arriving back to Hanoi around 5:30 PM.

*Inclusion: Transfers, guide on boat, entrance fee, boat/junk, breakfast, lunch, hotel.*

## Day 9: Your free day in Hanoi. Night train to Hue



Today is your free day in the Hanoi capital with all of its fascinating historical charm. Spend your day relaxing or shopping. Some suggestions include waking up early (about 6:00 AM) and joining in the some exercising around Hoan Kiem Lake, or visiting the numerous markets, shopping, and trying all of the street side traditional foods.

At 6:00 PM, we pick you up from our office or your hotel for the night train to Hue. Boarding is at 7:30 PM. You are in a shared AC soft sleeper cabin.

*Inclusion: Transfer drop off, guide drop off, breakfast, train ticket.*

## Day 10: See Hue heritage on boat & bike to rural villages



Arrival in Hue at around 9:00 AM. Station pick up then transfer to a prearranged hotel. Shower, short rest and breakfast.

Departure from your hotel for our morning explorations to visit the Imperial city to learn all about the royal kingdom here in the past. We then embark for our beautiful boat ride along the Perfume River, with stop at Thien Mu Pagoda.

Continue our boat journey downstream with pleasant viewing along the sides of the river and lunch onboard while we are sailing down the Perfume River.

Our afternoon start with biking to visit the flower village of Tien Non, it's just lovely to be among different types of flowers, then cycle a bit more to visit Thanh Tien paper flower making village, you can try to make one by yourself. After that, we visit village where they make traditional folk painting, more ride through the beautiful and peaceful countryside of Hue before hitting the road back to your hotel for about 5:00 PM.

Cycling Distance: 14 km

*Inclusion: Transfer, guide, entrance fee, morning shower, breakfast, lunch, local boat, bike & helmet, hotel.*

## Day 11: Hue – Visit Royal tombs, Vietnam cyclo & market visit - transfer to Hoi An



After breakfast at your hotel around 8:30 AM, we go on a relaxing 1 hour Vietnam cyclo ride to visit Dong Ba market then explore the Royal Tombs, choosing only to visit the best ones, as we have lots to do today. Visit Ming Mang and Khai Dinh Royal Tombs.

After it is time to begin our transfer to Hoian (about 4 hours). There is fabulous sightseeing en route

and we may make stops at: Lang Co Beach, Hai Van Pass, Cham Museum, and the Marble Mountains depending on time. Hoian in the evening. Overnight here.

*Tip: This is a very good chance for you to get great tailor-made clothes at reasonable prices. Hoianis well known for its tailoring.*

*Inclusion: Transfer, guide, entrance fee, breakfast, Vietnam cyclo, hotel.*

## Day 12: Country side tour & visit ancient town of Hoi An



At 8.00 AM, we meet at your hotel for a very short transfer to the boat docks, we boat to a fishing village where you see & experience the life of a fisherman here, activities from preparing the fishing tools to go fishing. Followed by a short basket boat row along the village of water coconut before our lunch.

the main town of Hoian.

We then cycle along the country road through the paddy fields of rice, coconut or corn heading to

Our afternoon is continued with sightseeing to the famous cultural sites around Hoian, we end our trip at around 5:00 PM at your hotel.

*Inclusion: Transfer, guide, local bike, local boat & basket, breakfast, lunch, water & snack, hotel.*

## Day 13: Hoi An – fly to Nha Trang



Breakfast at the hotel then transfer to the airport in Da Nang for a noon- flight to Nha Trang. Upon arrival, airport pick up then transfer to your hotel. Free to chill out on the beautiful white sand beach.

*Inclusion: Transfer, guide, domestic flight ticket, breakfast, hotel*



## Day 14: Nha Trang, island boat trip



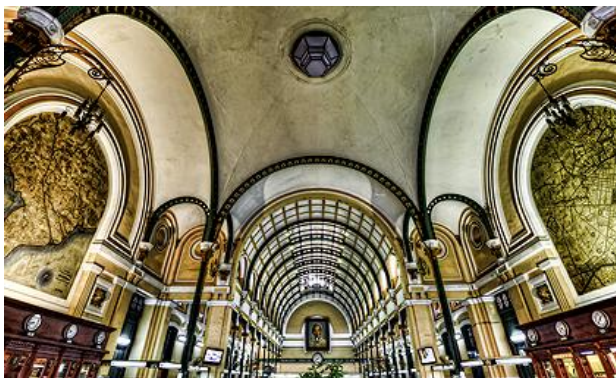
Morning pick up at around 8:00 AM from hotel and transfer to the boat station (about 15'). Hop on the private boat and begin a day on the water. The first stop is Tri Nguyen Aquarium. Then we cruise to Mot Island. This is one of the best places for snorkeling in Nha Trang. Hold your breath for as long as you can and dive deep into this colorful world of fish and coral. Next stop, Coral Island for sun bathing and relaxing on the off shore beach.

Lunch is served with a selection of fresh seafood.

After lunch, cruise to Tranh Island for more swimming and relaxing then boat back to Nha Trang city for around 5:00 PM. Free time in the evening and overnight at your hotel.

*Inclusion: Transfer, guide, entrance fee, breakfast, lunch, local boat, hotel*

## Day 15: Nha Trang - HCM City, city tour



We take an early flight this morning at 7:50 AM, arriving to HCM City at 8:45 AM. Transfer downtown and check-in at our hotel before our city tour of bustling HCM City starts. Visit the Binh Tay Market in Cho Lon; stopover at Thien Hau, a 150-year-old Chinese Temple; then visit a Lacquer-wares workshop as well as the Jade Emperor Pagoda. In the afternoon visit the War Remnants Museum, the Notre Dame Cathedral and the historic Central Post Office. We drop you off at your hotel around 5:30 PM.

*Inclusion: Transfer, guide, entrance fee, breakfast, domestic flight ticket , hotel*

## Day 16: Tay Ninh and the Cu Chi tunnels



Departing HCM City at 8:00 AM from your hotel for a morning excursion to Tay Ninh and the Great Cao Dai Temple (a place to worship a mixture of Buddhism, Confucius, Taoism, Hinduism and Christianity). Take part in the noon mass at the temple (1 hour). Lunch in Tay Ninh.

In the afternoon we visit the Cu Chi outdoor museum to learn about the infamous tunnel systems of the Viet Cong. Take this opportunity to get a unique understanding of the guerillas underground fighting strategies during the war Crawl through 50 to 100 meters of the 200 km tunnel system if you dare. On the way back to HCM City visit a local rice paper workshops and take in views of the Vietnam countryside. We drop you off at your hotel around 5:30 PM. Overnight at your hotel.

*Inclusion:* Transfer, guide, entrance fee, breakfast, hotel.

## Day 17: HCM City to the fertile Mekong Delta (Cai Be - Can Tho)



Depart HCM City at 8:00 AM from your hotel. Head south to Cai Be. Upon arrival at around 10:30 AM, board a boat for a journey through the Mekong's floating markets. See how river life goes on here, watch the trading between merchant ships and local farmers. Alive and exciting! Cruise through the secluded canals and cross the Mighty Mekong to an island where we stop to enjoy fresh seasonal fruit before boating to Vinh Long. Back on the bus

for our trip to Can Tho to overnight.

*Inclusion:* Transfer, guide, entrance fee, breakfast, lunch, hotel.

## Day 18: Can Tho – Chau Doc



An early start at 6:30 AM for a boat trip to Cai Rang floating market. We have some distance to cover to reach Phong Dien so take the time to enjoy the scenery. We take a short cruise followed by a walk on a quiet country road getting a little bit closer local life here.

In the afternoon, we head back to Chau Doc. Pause to visit the Stork Garden near Thot Not and an incense factory. We arrive late afternoon in Chau Doc where we conquer Sam Mountain

(about 3km) with a rewarding hike. From the top, the panorama views over reach into Cambodia. Check into the hotel and stay the night.

*Inclusion: Transfer, guide, entrance fee, local boat, breakfast, hotel.*

## Day 19: Chau Doc – Speed boat to Phnom Penh, half day city tour



After breakfast, we transfer to the boat pier for our departure to Phnom Penh. We board a speedboat at 8:00 AM and arrive in Phnom Penh at about 1:00 PM.

Your local guide greets you and takes you to the town center for lunch on your own before starting our half-day city tour.

We visit the Royal Palace, Silver Pagoda, Independence Monument and National Museum. Pass by the river front park and capture photographs of Watt Phnom, Watt Phnom Daun and Penh pagoda. Tour ends at your hotel around 6:00 PM.

*Inclusion: Transfer, guide, entrance fee, speedboat, breakfast, hotel.*

*Tip: Visa on arrival at Cambodia border costs ~ 35 USD. Remember to bring your passport photo (3x4 cm).*



## Day 20: Phnom Penh - flight to Siem Reap, visit Angkor Wat, sunset & Apsara Dance



Breakfast at your hotel, then transfer to Phnom Penh airport for departure to Siem Reap.

Arrival in Siem Reap greeted by your local guide. Transfer to your hotel, check in, then journey to the mother of all temples: Angkor Watt. Believed to be the world's largest religious building, this temple is the perfect fusion of symbolism and symmetry and a source of pride and strength to all

Khmers. Built in the 12<sup>th</sup> century by King Suryavarman II, this is most famous temple at the Angkor complex. 6:30 PM welcome dinner and Apsara Dance show at a local restaurant. Back to hotel to catch up on some rest in preparation for tomorrow.

*Inclusion:* Transfer, guide, entrance fee, domestic flight ticket, breakfast, dinner, hotel.

## Day 21: Siem Reap - visit Angkor Thom, Bayon & Taprohm



Today at 8:30 AM we hop on our bikes to explore the Angkor's World Heritage and splendid temples.

You visit the West Gate of Angkor Thom, Angkor Thom, South Gate, Bayon Temple, and Baphuon Temple. Also included today are visits to the Royal Enclosure, Phimeanakas, the Elephant Terrace and the Terrace of the Leper King.

We then continue on to visit the fabulous Ta Prohm embraced by the roots of the enormous fig trees and gigantic creepers. Bear witness to some of the measures being taken to preserve the temple while at the same time allowing nature reclaim the area.

Enjoy our one hour foot massage before transfer back to your hotel at around 6:30 PM.

*Inclusion:* Transfer, guide, entrance fee, one hour foot massage, breakfast, hotel.

## Day 22: Siem Reap - visit Bantey Srei, Artisan d'Angkor & silk farm. Flight to Luang Prabang, Laos



Breakfast at your hotel then 8:00 AM we start the day with a visit to Banteay Srei: nearly everyone's favorite site. The special charm of this temple lies in its small stature, remarkable state of preservation, and the excellence of its decorative carvings. Next is Banteay Samre's rose-coloured sandstone walls decorated with carvings and bas-reliefs.

Finally, we visit Artisan d'Angkor and a local silk farm. Tour of the classes and workshops to get a glimpse into the unique vocational training programs teaching young artists the techniques and styles of classic Cambodian artistry.

Transfer and catch your afternoon flight from Siem Reap to Luang Prabang. Airport pick upon arrival.

Inclusion: Transfer, guide, entrance fee, breakfast, hotel.

## Day 23: Luang Prabang exploration



Morning at your own leisure then in the afternoon at around 1:30 PM, meet with your local guide for a city tour to visit the tranquil and charming town of Luang Prabang.

Visit the National Museum (closed Tuesday) at the former Royal Palace, the impressive Stupa of Watt Visoun and the shrine of Watt Aham at Watt Mai. Next, we ascent up to the top of Mount

Phousi for an enjoyable exploration of the sacred, gilded stupa with a beautiful sunset view of the city and the Mekong river

From there we explore the night market, where you can find a lovely selection of handmade textiles made by the local Hmong people. Back to the hotel, free time to relax, dinner and retire for the night.

*Inclusion:* *Transfer, guide, entrance fee, breakfast, hotel.*

### **Day 24: Visit Pak Ou cave**



and sizes left by devoted pilgrims.

Today we leave hotel at 8:00 AM and enjoy a short-guided tour with visits to the city's oldest temples: Watt Sene and the magnificent Watt Xiengthong. We then embark on a cruise upstream on the Mekong River, offering us breathtaking views of the tranquil countryside. Our destination is the mysterious Pak Ou Caves. A set of two linked caves crammed with thousands of gold lacquered Buddha statues of various shapes

Along the way, we stop at the village of Ban Xanghai, where local rice wine is produced. On the way back, we take a short drive to another small village, Ban Phanom, which has become famous for its hand weaving. Stay overnight at your hotel in Luang Prabang.

*Inclusion:* *Transfer, guide, entrance fees, hotel.*

### **Day 25: Departure Luang Prabang**



Breakfast at your hotel. Depending on your flight you may have some more time for shopping. Then we transfer you to the airport for your flight home. Farewell, and hope to see you again soon!

*Inclusion:* *Transfer, breakfast.*





**Costs exclude:** *International flight ticket Siem Reap - Luang Prabang, compulsory gala dinner for Christmas & New Eve*, visa, insurance, drinks, personal expenses, others not mentioned in details, tips are welcome!

## **LEGAL ASPECTS**

**Booking Terms & Conditions:** Tour itinerary and tour prices are subject to change without prior notice. Please [click here](#) for more information.

## **ORGANISATION**

**Transportation schedule:** Please be aware that flight times, trains, hotels and other services are subject to availability. When flights/trains are cancelled or delayed, Footprint will endeavour to secure alternative arrangements of similar value. Hotel, flight and train details will be updated once the booking is confirmed (your confirmation e-mail).

**Tour guide:** English speaking guides (on sites)

**Closed sites:** Some sites might be closed during the time you visit Vietnam (e.g. the HCM mausoleum in Hanoi is closed on Mondays and Fridays). Please consult with your travel agent if you want to have further information concerning this issue.

## **ACCOMMODATION**

**Hotel:** We use 3 star standard hotel (s) except beach hotel/resort 4 star standard in Hoi An, twin shared room (s). Upgrade is available on request. Check – in: 14:00; out: 12:00 noon. Early check in if it is subject to availability.

**Homestay condition:** Very basic & simple with local style , please visit our website for FAQs on [www.Footprint.vn](http://www.Footprint.vn)

## **TRANSPORT**

**Ha Long Bay:** Shared minivan and deluxe junk. Twin shared cabin aboard the boat. Upgrade is available at your request.

**Car/Van Quality:** Using new AC car or van depending on your group size.



**Train:** Sleeper Train to Sapa/Hue: Please [click here](#) for more information.

## **FOOD**

**Meals:** Vietnamese/Laos/Cambodia foods and seafoods. If you have any allergies, special requests or if you are on a special diet please let us know. We will arrange it for you in advance.

## **SUSTAINABILITY**

**Please Travel Responsibly:** The small things you do will make a [big difference!](#)

## **PREPARATION OF THE CUSTOMER**

**What to Bring:** Passport, change of clothes, sunglasses and hat, toiletries, sunblock, insect repellent, flashlights, good sport shoes, personal first aid kit and medicines, small VND notes for buying drinks. If you feel the need then sleeping bags and a cable lock for your bags is recommended.

## **TREKKING AND CYCLING INFORMATION**

**Trekking & Cycling times** are just estimates and may change depending on your personal fitness and weather.

**Experience:** The trek demands some experience in co-ordination, fitness and stamina. The great effort will be rewarded with fantastic views. Clients should have previous trekking experience. Nevertheless, our guide will be flexible to suggest you the most proper trekking route adapted to your physical fitness.

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

This itinerary and supplementary information has been compiled in good faith and was accurate at the time of writing.