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# Best of Vietnam Tour

## 12 days from \$1799

Per person twin share, including flights from Australia



Depart 10 August, 07 September, 19 October,  
02 or 16 November 2019

*Hanoi, Halong Bay, Da Nang, Hoi An, Hue, Ho Chi Minh City,  
Mekong Delta*

### **Package Inclusions:**

- Vietnam Airlines return economy class airfares departing Sydney or Melbourne (or if unavailable, China Southern Airlines or Thai Airways)
- Vietnam internal airfares
- 9 nights accommodation (twin/double) plus 1 night on board during your Halong Bay cruise
- Round trip airport & hotel transfers
- Daily meals as indicated (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner)
- Coach transportation and all transfers
- English speaking tour guide(s)
- Government taxes and service charges

### **Package Exclusions:**

- Prepaid tipping: \$100
- Vietnam visa
- Travel insurance (strongly recommended)
- Personal expenses & anything optional
- Any items not listed in the above inclusions or in the itinerary

*Subject to confirmation by the airlines, hotels & tour operator.  
Booking conditions & cancellation fees apply.*

**Call Destination International on 1300 813 391  
for enquiries & reservations.**

### **Tour Highlights:**

- Experience a guided tour of **Hanoi City**, including **Ho Chi Minh's Mausoleum** and the '**Hanoi Hilton**'
- Take an overnight traditional junk **cruise through Halong Bay**
- Stroll through the peaceful ancient streets of **Hoi An**
- Tour **Hue City**, the former capital of Vietnam and location of the impressive **Imperial City**
- Immerse yourself in the vibrant city life of **Ho Chi Minh City**
- Savour the rural delights and local lifestyles of the **Mekong Delta**
- See the remnants of the Vietnam War at the **Cu Chi Tunnels**
- Select from a wide range of **optional activities, tours, and special meals**

Vietnam is filled with stunning natural beauty and deep culture. Its mountains, jungles, and coastlines range from virtually untouched to well-groomed. Rural communities remain authentic and hospitable, and major cities are cosmopolitan but retain much of the old-world charm of the colonial and precolonial eras.

This medium-paced tour covers some of the best historical and cultural sights Vietnam has to offer, while also providing plenty of free time for you to relax or explore further. From the peaceful capital city of Hanoi to the stunning natural beauty and emerald waters of Halong Bay; from the ancient streets of Hoi An to the rural charm of the Mekong Delta; from the vibrant city life of Ho Chi Minh City to the poignant Cu Chi Tunnels, there's so much to explore and discover!

After the core tour, extensions are available to Cambodia, to explore Angkor – one of the mightiest cities of the ancient world and home to the astonishing temples of the Khmer empire, or to Phu Quoc Island – to relax in the pristine beach environment of this beautiful tropical Vietnamese destination.

*Unlike many other tours, this is not a seat in coach package.*

## **ITINERARY:**

### **Day 1: Australia Hanoi**

Fly to Hanoi via connecting cities. On arrival at Noi Bai International Airport, you will be welcomed by your guide and driver who will bring you to your hotel in **Hanoi City** to rest up for the tour ahead. Hanoi is over 1000 years old and is currently the capital of Vietnam, as well the commercial, political, and cultural heart of the country.

**Note:** *Some flights may depart one day earlier.*

### **Day 2: Hanoi City Tour (B, L)**

Our guide and driver will pick you up for your **Hanoi city tour**: Visit the infamous Hoa Lo Prison – the '**Hanoi Hilton**'. Those incarcerated at Hoa Lo included Pete Peterson, who became the first US Ambassador to a unified Vietnam in 1995, and the late Senator John McCain, the Republican nominee for the US presidency in 2008. Next, visit the **Temple of Literature**, the first university in Vietnam, built for the sons of mandarins (high government officials). Then it's on to **West Lake and Tran Quoc Temple**, the oldest Buddhist temple in Hanoi, which is located on a small island near the southeastern shore of the lake. After lunch, visit **Ba Dinh Square**, where Ho Chi Minh read Viet Nam's Declaration of Independence on 2 September 1945. **Visit Ho Chi**

**Minh's Mausoleum** (reminiscent of Lenin's Mausoleum in Moscow), and **Ho Chi Minh's House**, a modest residence from which he led the country until his death in 1969. Then, transfer by bus to the ancient '36 Meandering Streets' of Hanoi's Old Quarter, which you can explore before before returning to the hotel.

**Optional Activity** (at your own expense); **Water Puppet Theatre and Hanoi Foodie tour**: A one thousand year old tradition, and one of the most popular tourist attractions in Hanoi, Water Puppet Theatre is considered to be one of the cultural highlights of Northern Vietnam, and includes a Vietnamese orchestra playing traditional music. Tonight, you'll walk through the bustling Old Quarter as your guide tells you about the various foods on offer – stop and try some if you like! Stop at a 'bia hoi' store, sit down and share a relaxing moment with locals. The sidewalks are full of pop-up restaurants which offer truly local food like bánh cuốn (rice rolls with pork and herbs inside), and many kinds of noodle dish. You will enjoy southern-style beef noodles in Hang Dieu street. End the night with a drink at a local coffee shop, talking about life in Vietnam, before heading back to your hotel.

**NOTE:** Ho Chi Minh's Mausoleum is only viewable from outside if your visit is on a Monday or Friday, and from 5 Sep. to 5 Nov. due to annual maintenance. Rules regarding dress and behaviour are strictly enforced by staff and guards. Legs must be covered (no shorts or miniskirts).



### **Day 3: Hanoi Halong Bay (B, L, D)**

Travel by coach to **Halong Bay** and take a **boat trip** to explore one of the world's great natural wonders, cruising the thousands of limestone islands filled with caves of all shapes and sizes. The sails of junks and sampans gliding along the clear and emerald waters of the bay form a magnificent picturesque scene that blends with the sky. You also get a chance to visit some of the hidden grottoes beneath the towering cliffs. A **seafood lunch and dinner** will be served on board the charming junk. Stay overnight on board.



### **Day 4: Halong Bay Hanoi Da Nang Hoi An (B, L)**

Enjoy the aquamarine waters of the bay at its best as the junk continues to cruise quietly through spectacular limestone formations. Disembark from the junk at noon and transfer to Hanoi airport for a short flight to **Da Nang**. On arrival, you will be picked up and transferred to **Hoi An**, an ancient town recognised as a World Cultural Heritage site by UNESCO. Check into your hotel in Hoi An.

**Note:** In the event that sufficient seats are not available for the Hanoi to Da Nang flight, the group will instead fly from Hai Phong.

### **Day 5: Hoi An (B)**

You will be escorted by our local guide to **discover Hoi An** by walking tour through the narrow streets of this charming town. Perhaps more

than any other place in Vietnam, Hoi An retains the feel of centuries past. Once known as Faifo, Hoi An was an influential port along the Silk Road. For over 500 years merchants from China, Japan, France, and Portugal settled in the prosperous town, resulting in a distinctive blend of culture, cuisine, religions and architecture. In 1999, the town was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Then, visit the highly-regarded Bebe Tailor Shop to discover the story behind Vietnam's traditional outfits ([click here for more info](#)). The remainder of the afternoon is free at leisure. You may also join one of our optional tours (at your own expense).

**Optional Activity 1 – Half-day Cycling Tour from Hoi An to Tra Que Village:** Take a scenic bicycle ride through the rice paddies to Tra Que Village just outside Hoi An. This little village is well-known for supplying the many restaurants and hotels in the area with fresh herbs and vegetables. You will walk through the vegetable gardens, experience how the local farmers work the land and learn more about the history of the village and the importance of herbs in Vietnamese medicine and cuisine, before your relaxing pedal back to town.

**Or:**

**Optional Activity 2 – Fishing Village & Waterway Eco-tour:** Enjoy an authentic social and cultural insight into the local Vietnamese way of life. Drive to a local farming village travelling along picturesque country roads. Explore the now tranquil coconut-palm flanked waterways of a past war and hear of the extreme conditions endured by soldiers on both sides. Meet local fishermen and experience their daily life. You will take a wooden boat to a 'water coconut forest', and join local fishermen on the river to experience round net and cast net fishing. Learn to paddle bamboo basket boats and join in a basket boat race. You'll also learn how to use reeds or palm leaves to make grasshoppers, birds, rings, sunglasses, etc. Return to the boat to enjoy lunch and a cold beer or soft drink and then return the hotel by car.



### **Day 6: Hoi An (B)**

This morning, you will visit the Réhahn Museum, to view the ‘Precious Heritage Collection’, by French Photographer Réhahn. This work focuses on the endangered cultural heritage of Vietnam’s 54 ethnic minority groups, attempting to document their rapidly-changing ways of life. Afterwards, you have free time at leisure, or you may enjoy the following optional activities (at your own expense):

**Optional Activity 1: Half-day Da Nang Tour (Ba Na Hills & Golden Bridge).** Explore Ba Na hills, sightseeing the panoramic views of Quang nam – Da Nang city; Discover the famous Golden Bridge (pictured bottom right); See famous places such as the French Village Campanile, Nine Floor Goddess Shrine, Tombstone Temple, Linh Phong Monastery, and Linh Chua Linh Tu Temple, and discover Fantasy Park with its adventurous games. Includes lunch.

**Optional Activity 2: Evening Cultural Stage Show.** Lune Performing Center Hoi An. The Centre, with its graceful bamboo dome architecture, is known for such performances as My Village, Teh Dar, and The Mist. The shows portray the daily lives of farmers, minority tribes, and urban and rural dwellers, and carry Lune Productions’ vision of upholding Vietnam’s culture and heritage, creating a whole new destination where heritage and art converge.

Depending on the day of arrival in Hoi An, you may instead see the stunning **Hoi An Memories Show**. This colourful and musically dazzling show, with a cast of nearly 500 actors and actresses, recalls the memories of Hoi An as a prosperous trading port over 400 years. It took nearly two years to produce the one-hour show. The theatre uses the waters of the Hoai River as its 25,000 m<sup>2</sup> stage along with state-of-the-art lighting technology and sophisticated sound effects.



### **Day 7: Hoi An Hue (B)**

Today, drive to **Hue City** stopping along the way to take pictures at **Lang Co Beach**. During the Nguyen Dynasty (1802 – 1945), Hue was the political, economic and cultural capital of Vietnam, and its historical monuments were recognised as a World Cultural Heritage Site by UNESCO since 1993. One of the largest battles of the Vietnamese revolutionary war was fought in Hue, as part of the 1968 ‘Tet Offensive’ that turned the tide of the war against the US-backed Republic of Vietnam. On arrival, you will take a boat trip to **Thien Mu Pagoda** – an historic pagoda on the banks of the Perfume River. Apart from the scenic riverside and hilltop location, the Thien Mu Pagoda and its environs are rich in history, standing witness to almost four hundred years of tumultuous nation-building in Vietnam. Transfer back to the centre of Hue city to visit the massive **Kinh Thanh Citadel**, the most well-known and iconic site in Hue, a sprawling complex within 2.5 km of



walls, comprised of the **Imperial City**, several museums, lakes, and lovely gardens, all laid out in a series of concentric circles. Return to the hotel.

**Optional Activity:** Enjoy a sumptuous **Royal Dinner** (at your own expense). Dress in beautiful traditional clothes (provided by the restaurant) and be served dishes which used to be made for the royal family. Enjoy live music during dinner.



### **Day 8: Hue Ho Chi Minh City (B)**

We transfer to Hue Airport to catch a morning flight to **Ho Chi Minh City**. On arrival at Tan Son Nhat Airport in Ho Chi Minh City, you are picked up for transfer to the city centre to visit the imposing **Dong Khoi Street** (formerly Catinat street) before going to the **Notre Dame Cathedral**. This is the most famous landmark in Vietnam, as the twin bell towers can be seen from a great distance. In the same square is the famous **Saigon Post Office**, the largest functioning post office in Vietnam. Continue on to visit **Reunification Palace**, the palace of the presidents of South Vietnam before 1975, and the **War Remains Museum**, where you can learn about the Vietnam War. At the end of the day, visit **Ben Thanh Market** before returning to your hotel, after which you are free at leisure.



### **Day 9: Ho Chi Minh City Mekong Delta (B, L)**

Depart with our guide and driver for a scenic drive through the **Mekong Delta**, home to the richest agricultural lands in Vietnam. On arrival at My Tho City, take a boat trip on the Mekong River to fishing villages and **Dragon, Unicorn, Turtle and Phoenix Islands**. Crossing the **Mekong River**, you'll cruise along a small canal to see the daily life of locals in **Bến Tre Province**, visiting Quới An bee farm and handicraft workshop to enjoy some honey-tea and see how people make things from coconut wood. Take a horse-cart along country roads to visit fruit orchards, enjoy tropical fruit and listen to traditional music. Then, take small sampans back to your cruise to '**Coconut Village**' for a coconut candy workshop and tasting. Visit **Phoenix Island** for a rice-paper workshop, then return by boat to My Tho and then by road back to Ho Chi Minh City. Enjoy the rest of the day free at leisure.



**Day 10: Ho Chi Minh City Cu Chi Tunnels Ho Chi Minh City (B)**

After breakfast, we visit the amazing **Cu Chi Tunnels**, a well-known historical vestige of the Vietnamese revolution. This cobweb-like tunnel complex is a network of underground dug-outs over 200 km long, consisting of many layers and turnings with meeting, living, and fighting quarters where we learn firsthand how the Viet Cong survived their extraordinary underground existence during the Vietnam War. Visit a lacquerware factory on the way back to the city, and then enjoy the remainder of the day at leisure in Ho Chi Minh City.

**Optional Lunch:** Hội An Sense restaurant is a beautiful harmony between refined cuisine and unique architecture. Set on an opulent rooftop with intimate terrace, relaxing fish pond and vivid lanterns, Hội An Sense draws influences from vibrant flavours of Vietnam's central region.

**Optional Dinner Cruise:** Cruise on Saigon River and enjoy a delicious selection of local dishes as you take in the ambience of this charming city (at your own expense).



### **Day 11: Ho Chi Minh City Australia (B)**

After breakfast, you will be transferred to the airport for your return flight home.

### **Day 12: Australia**

Arrive home this morning.

**Reservations Phone 1300 813391**



ATAS Accreditation Number: A10718

ATAS vets travel agents against strict criteria to ensure they meet certain standards, are reliable and professional businesses. ATAS agents need to meet high levels of business discipline, training, compliance with Australian Consumer Law and compliance with a strict code of conduct – ensuring your piece of mind when booking travel.

We have met these stringent requirements in order to become nationally accredited. Our accreditation means we are the best in the industry, credible and a professional business that takes pride in its staff being expertly trained. This means you can book your travel knowing you're in the safe hands of a trusted and reputable travel agent.

Further information can be found at <http://www.atas.com.au/>

### **Affordable Holidays - HOW DO WE DO IT???**

We go directly to our overseas suppliers to source the best possible price and holiday for you. That's why our holidays are so affordable! There are many overseas operators that currently do not sell their holidays in Australia and we have approached these reputable businesses to represent them in our country. These travel professionals offer exceptional service and tours at just the right price. If you think you are paying too much for your travel arrangements, please give us a call, we will do our best to find you a holiday that fits within your travel budget.



## **DESTINATION INTERNATIONAL HOLIDAYS BOOKING CONDITIONS**

**Please read this information prior to making your reservation**

### **BROCHURE VALIDITY**

The information presented in our brochure is correct to the best of our knowledge, but is subject to change without notice. Changes can occur with respect to prices, itineraries, duration of holidays, service standards, tour content, airfares and schedules. This is out of our control. Please ensure you advise details of your requirements at the time of booking.

### **GOODS AND SERVICES TAX (GST)**

The Australian GST does not apply to international travel. Any service fees, courier, cancellation and amendment fees are subject to GST. You will be charged GST where applicable.

### **DEPOSIT**

A deposit is required to confirm your booking (varies depending on package booked). Receipt of deposit will be taken as an understanding by Destination International Holidays that the customer has checked their confirmed travel arrangements and has read and agreed to the terms and conditions.

### **FINAL PAYMENT**

Payment in full must be made no less than 120 days before travel, unless required earlier by any supplier.

### **PRICES**

All prices for our tours are advised in Australian Dollars (\$AUD). They are based on airfares, schedules and tariffs at the time of printing. Destination International Holidays reserves the right to vary the cost of the tour, taxes and airline prices if necessary by reason of currency fluctuation, cost increase, or airfare increase. All prices are subject to confirmation from local tour operators. Once full payment has been received by Destination International no surcharges in respect to currency fluctuations will be applied.

**ITINERARY CHANGES**

Destination International Holidays reserves the right to amend the itinerary for reasons such as service requirements, road or weather conditions or unforeseen circumstances. Where a change is of a significant nature, it will be advised to our customers in writing. Destination International Holidays reserves the right to substitute hotels, lodges, inns and camps with properties of similar standard

**AMENDMENT FEES**

Any deviation to packages advertised or quotes will incur a fee of \$150 per person.

Should you need to alter your confirmed reservations, there will be an automatic fee charged of \$150 per amendment or transaction, plus any new arrangements made. Additionally, there may be cancellation fees levied by the tour operator or fees may be applicable where arrangements have been pre-purchased.

In addition, we charge

- \$50 per person for all airline seat reservations and baggage charges plus any airline fees.
- \$100 per person for all Tourist visa processing plus the cost for the visa fee.
- \$75 per person to reissue any travel documents lost in the mail.
- \$100 per person to process insurance claims when travel insurance has not been purchased from this office.

**CANCELLATIONS**

Cancellation fees will be levied relative to the amount of notice given as follows:

Days' Notice	90 or more	75-90	65-75	65-1
	Loss of Deposit and 50% loss of fare	75%	85%	100%

The above are Destination International Holidays cancellation fees. Airlines and Tour Operators may have additional fees. Transfer of a confirmed booking to another tour or departure date is deemed a cancellation of the original booking. There will be no refund for cancellation of unused services on or after commencement date. Please note that employees of any overseas suppliers are not authorised by Destination International Holidays to make any undertakings to our clients in respect of refunds or other matters.

**ACCOMMODATION**

There will be variations in the size, standard and presentation of rooms and facilities within the one hotel. This is beyond the control of Destination International Holidays.

**CLAIMS**

If you encounter any problems on your holiday, you should try and solve it directly with the supplier whilst overseas. If it is not possible to do so please do so in writing within 30 days of completing your Destination International Holidays arrangements.

**TRAVEL INSURANCE**

You must be insured for the duration of your trip. You need comprehensive travel insurance to cover cancellation, health requirements, luggage and additional expenses. Insurance policies rarely cover for loss of cash.

**PASSPORT, VISA & VACCINATIONS**

You must familiarise yourself with any visa and health requirements that may be applicable in the countries you are visiting. You are responsible for all entry/exit health and any other documents required by laws, regulations, orders, demands or requirements of countries visited or transited. Please note that passport and visa requirements are not the responsibility of Destination International Holidays. We will not be held liable for any loss or expense due to the failure to comply with the above. We recommend that you be in possession of a passport valid for at least 6 months beyond your intended stay overseas.

**CONSULAR ADVICE**

Official travel advice issued by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade is available by calling 1300 555 135 or visiting their web site [www.dfat.gov.au](http://www.dfat.gov.au). You must review this information both prior to making your booking and prior to departure.

**TOUR CONDITIONS**

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**CONTRACT**

The contract between Destination International Holidays is governed by the laws of the State of Victoria. By booking with Destination International Holidays the client agrees to be bound by the terms and conditions referred to in our brochure.



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