



ESSENCE OF VIETNAM **11 days/10 nights**

Itinerary Code: INS-PA02
Tour Operator / Agent: Inspire Travel
Quotation date: March 20, 2014
Validity: March 20, to Dec 31, 2015

OVERVIEW

Uncover the true essence of this amazing country as you travel from South to North along the coast. Beginning in modern, vibrant Ho Chi Minh City, your adventure takes you deep into the Mekong Delta to discover life on the water. Head North to Da Nang city and the ancient town of Hoi An, famed for its Tailors and authentic historical buildings. Hue is the ancient imperial capital of Vietnam and is rich in history and culture, providing the finest food in the nation. We finish our tour in Hanoi, the thousand year old capital of Vietnam which is still very much the cultural and artistic heart of the country.

ITINERARY

Day 1 | Arrive Ho Chi Minh City (D)

Arrive in Ho Chi Minh City, meet your guide and driver then transfer to hotel for check-in. In the evening enjoy a welcome dinner at a local restaurant.

Ho Chi Minh City formerly named Saigon, is the largest city in Vietnam and much more crowded and exciting than Hanoi. It overcame the war history to become a modern and dynamic City. The boast of Saigon is it's French Colonial architecture and wide boulevards.

*Accommodation: In Ho Chi Minh City.
Meals: Dinner*

Day 2 | Ho Chi Minh City - Cu Chi tunnel (B/L)

Today you will visit Ho Chi Minh City, the former Saigon – capital of the South Vietnam during 1954-1975. The tour will include the War Remnants Museum, which shows the Vietnam War through many left-over weapons and photos taken by international journalists, then travel on to see the Reunification Palace, former residence of the South Vietnam President. Continue the morning with a stop at Notre Dame Cathedral and the Central Post Office, which was designed by the Gustavo Eiffel Company in 1886. Enjoy a Vietnamese lunch at a local restaurant, and then drive to Cu Chi to see the tunnels which were built over a period of 20 years from 1940s to 1972 by Vietcong to hide themselves. Take a walking tour at the site, try a short part of the tunnel (if you

wish to) to understand more about the life of guerrillas in the war time. Return to the hotel by late afternoon.

Accommodation: In Ho Chi Minh City

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Day 3 | Mekong Delta Exploration (B/L/)

Depart to Cai Be, a small town deep in the Mekong Delta. Here board a private boat and visit the colourful Cai Be floating market, where you'll cruise among local barges full of fruits and vegetables. Later a special visit will be made to an ancient Mandarin's house, dating from the 19th century, where the family will host you with a delicious lunch. You will also visit some local home factories that produce rice paste, rice popcorn and coconut candies. After lunch, your boat trip will cruise deeper into the countryside on smaller canals and creeks passing under small traditional bridges made from wood and bamboo. You will discover beautiful landscapes and observe typical Mekong Delta rural life. At the end of your cruise, return by road to Ho Chi Minh City.

Accommodation: In Ho Chi Minh City

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Day 4 | Ho Chi Minh City – Da Nang (B/L/D)

Transfer to airport for a quick 1 hour morning flight to Da Nang. On arrival at Danang airport, meet your new driver then transfer to Cham Museum to see the collection of Champa artifacts. On the coastal drive to Hoi An, stop for a beautiful photo at the Marble mountain. Arrive in Hoi An, have lunch in a lovely restaurant in the old town. In the afternoon, check-in at the hotel and enjoy free time for shopping or swimming at the hotel's pool. In the evening, take a stroll through the colorful streets inside the old town for dinner.

Hoi An is called the "Ancient Town", one of quietest cities in Vietnam with plenty of lantern shops, silk shops and tailors shops along the streets. Hoi An is one of the exciting and gaudy trading port centers of Southeast Asia from the 16th century. Hoi An is also known for Chinese and Japanese architecture and tasty central Vietnamese cuisine.

Accommodation: In Hoi An

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 5 | Hoi An (B)

After breakfast, start the beautiful morning with a walking tour in the small quiet streets of the old heritage town. Visit one of the quaint traditional houses, Japanese bridge, Chinese Assembly hall, handicraft workshops, and the vibrant market. In the



afternoon you will be free to relax at the pool side, go shopping, explore the town or join the optional tour to My Son Sanctuary.

Accommodation: In Hoi An
Meals: Breakfast

Day 6 | Hoi An – Hue (B/L)

After breakfast, enjoy a scenic drive to Hue via Da Nang and Hai Van (Sea Cloud) pass. En route you will have a chance for a photo stop at the China Beach, and then drive over the stunning pass which geographically divides Vietnam into two different climate zones. Another stop at Lang Co Beach will allow you the chance to step into the water of one of most beautiful beaches of the central coast of Vietnam. Lunch on arrival in Hue. In the afternoon take a boat trip along the romantic Perfume River to visit Thien Mu pagoda, then continue on to the Imperial City. Take a walking tour to visit the last Royal Nguyen dynasty's monuments. Check-in at the hotel then free time.

Hue is famous for its magnificent monuments and architectural buildings. Located in the centre of Vietnam, with a simple life and pleasant local people, Hue brings to you a warm welcome feeling.

Accommodation: In Hue
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Day 7 | Hue – Hanoi (B/D)

After breakfast, check-out then transfer to visit the Mausoleums of the Nguyen Kings, Tu Duc and Khai Dinh. Continue to the airport for an early afternoon flight to Hanoi, the capital city of Vietnam. Upon arrival, transfer to your hotel for check-in. In the evening, you will enjoy a Hanoi style dinner in a local restaurant.

Hanoi, The capital of Vietnam welcomes you with very special oriental beauty which lies in the lovely and friendly smiles of the locals you meet. During your holiday, you will stay at one of the well located hotels in the city center. It is near or within the old quarter, therefore you will find it easy to explore the vibrant life of a true Hanoian, go shopping and visit many cultural spots within easy walking distance.

Accommodation: In Hanoi
Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Day 8 | Hanoi City Tour (B/L)

Today, you will visit some beautiful spots which are regarded as the heart and soul of Hanoi such as Ho Chi Minh's Mausoleum and Stilt House, then continue our visit to the Temple of Literature, the first National University of Vietnam, where you may take part in music exchanges with local people. Lunch is served at a local restaurant. In the



afternoon, learn about the 54 traditions of Vietnam through an excursion to the Museum of Ethnology, then transfer to downtown for an meandering cyclo trip in the Old Quarter. There will be plenty of photo opportunities around Hoan Kiem Lake then end the day with a special traditional Water Puppet show.

Accommodation: In Hanoi
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Day 9 | Hanoi - Ha Long Bay (B/L/D)

About a three and half hour drive from Hanoi (4hrs for the big bus with a half way rest stop), you will reach Halong Bay then board on a traditional junk for a fantastic cruise to explore the magnificent rock formations and grottos that this area is famous for. After lunch, take a rowing boat to visit one of the fishing villages on the bay. In the late afternoon, an optional Kayaking trip is available to discover more parts of the area on your own, or just relax and enjoy watching the sun go down. Dinner will be served on board with local seafood specialities.

Halong is a UNESCO World Natural Heritage site which should never be missed on a visit to Vietnam. It has a lot of beautiful caves and grottoes around with characteristic limestone cliffs. It doesn't matter whether you are a nature lover or not, this bay is truly majestic..

Accommodation: on Ha Long Bay
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner

Day 10 | Ha Long Bay - Hanoi (B/D)

Early in the morning enjoy a cup of tea or Vietnamese coffee then join the Vietnamese Tai Chi class on the sundeck and catch the first rays of sunrise for another beautiful day on the bay. Continue our cruise among the breathtaking scenery, visit one of the most beautiful limestone cave, and open your eyes, your mind and your ears to nature. At 9.30am we will check-out and then have a delicious brunch before disembarking. Around 11:00 meet the driver at the pier then enjoy the drive back to Hanoi. In the evening gather together in a local restaurant for your farewell dinner.

Accommodation: In Hanoi
Meals: Brunch, Dinner

Day 11 | Hanoi Departure (B)

Breakfast and free time for any last minute shopping until you are transferred to the airport for your onward flight. Hotel check-out time is 12:00pm.

Accommodation: On your flight
Meals: Breakfast



INCLUSIONS:

- Accommodation in a double or twin share room with daily breakfast
- Overnight cruise on board a wooden boat in Halong Bay (non-private boat)
- Sightseeing tours, transfers and all services as mentioned in the itinerary
- Private air-conditioned vehicle during all tours and transfers.
- Experienced English speaking guide throughout whole trip
- Entrance fees for all visits as mentioned in the itinerary
- Meals as specified in the itinerary
- Water puppet show
- 1 bottle of Water and tissues/day/person

EXCLUSIONS:

- All flights
- Single supplement
- Vietnamese visa (a visa is compulsory and must be arranged in advance)
- Meals, if not specified in the itinerary
- Travel insurance (we highly recommend that you purchase adequate insurance)
- Gratuities for guides and drivers
- Personal expenses, such as laundry, telephone, drinks, etc.
- All other services not mentioned in the itinerary

HOTEL SPECIFICATION

Cities	3 star hotel	4 star hotel
Hanoi	Golden Lotus (Superior room)	Prestige Hotel (Deluxe room)
	Chalcedony (Deluxe room)	Sunway Hotel (Deluxe room)
Halong	Huong Hai Boat (Deluxe Cabin)	Indochina Sails (Superior Cabin)
	Bai Tho Boat (Superior Cabin)	Emeraude Classic (Superior Cabin)
Hue	Hue Queen Hotel (First Class room)	Saigon Morin (Colonia Deluxe)
Hoian	Ancient House resort (Superior room)	Hoian Beach Resort (Deluxe room)
	Hi An Bamboo village (Superior room)	Vinh Hung Riverside Resort (Deluxe room)
HCMC	Nhat Ha (Superior room)	Duxton (Deluxe room)



	Northern (Superior room)	Palace Hotel Saigon (Deluxe room)
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