

Inside Vietnam

Hanoi, Halong Bay, Hué, Hoi An, Nha Trang,
Dalat, Ho Chi Minh City

January 2018



Join us on this all new “Inside Vietnam” group tour in January 2018! Vietnam is truly a nation reborn, and we invite you to discover the depth of its beauty on this unique Asian adventure.

Traversing the entire country from north to south, you’ll journey from Hanoi to Ho Chi Minh City, stopping en route to explore the idyllic seaside retreat of Nha Trang, the French-flavored hilltop town of Dalat, and much more. We’ll even have the opportunity to see both the sunset and sunrise over magical Halong Bay during an overnight cruise aboard a traditional junk—an intimate experience that’s only possible in a small group like ours.

All along the way, we’ll introduce you to the incredibly friendly people who are welcoming American travelers with open arms. From the cities to the seaside to the highlands, let Vietnam’s warmth and beauty amaze you—in all its diversity. Best of all, you’ll travel in style with your friends from Southern Exposure!

REMINDER: Space for this special journey is available on a first-come, first-serve basis and is truly limited. To reserve your place today, please call the Southern Exposure office at **(269) 962-1255**. If you haven’t experienced a Southern Exposure travel adventure before, feel free to ask questions or meet with the Southern Exposure staff.



Snapshot Itinerary: Inside Vietnam 2018

This unique group travel adventure in January 2018 will showcase both the rich history and natural beauty of Vietnam, from north to south. Below is a quick look at our itinerary. Read on for additional details for each day.

Day 1 – Depart U.S.

Day 2 – Arrive in Hanoi, Vietnam

Day 3 – Explore Hanoi / Enjoy Water Puppet Show

Day 4 – Hanoi / Optional Tho Ha Countryside Tour

Day 5 – Visit Bat Trang Ceramic Village

Day 6 – Travel Overland to Halong Bay / Embark Junk (Traditional Wooden Sailboat)

Day 7 – Fly to Hué

Day 8 – Explore Hué

Day 9 – Travel overland to Hoi An / Cooking Class

Day 10 – Hoi An / Optional Cyclo-Rickshaw Ride and Thu Bon River Cruise

Day 11 – Hoi An / Explore Champa Ruins at My Son Sanctuary

Day 12 – Fly to Nha Trang / Boat Tour to Fishing Village

Day 13 – A Day in the Life of Xom Gio Village

Day 14 – Travel overland to Dalat / University Visit / Home-Hosted Dinner

Day 15 – Optional Dalat Agricultural Tour / Explore Old French Train Station / Visit Linh Phuoc Pagoda

Day 16 – Fly to Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon)

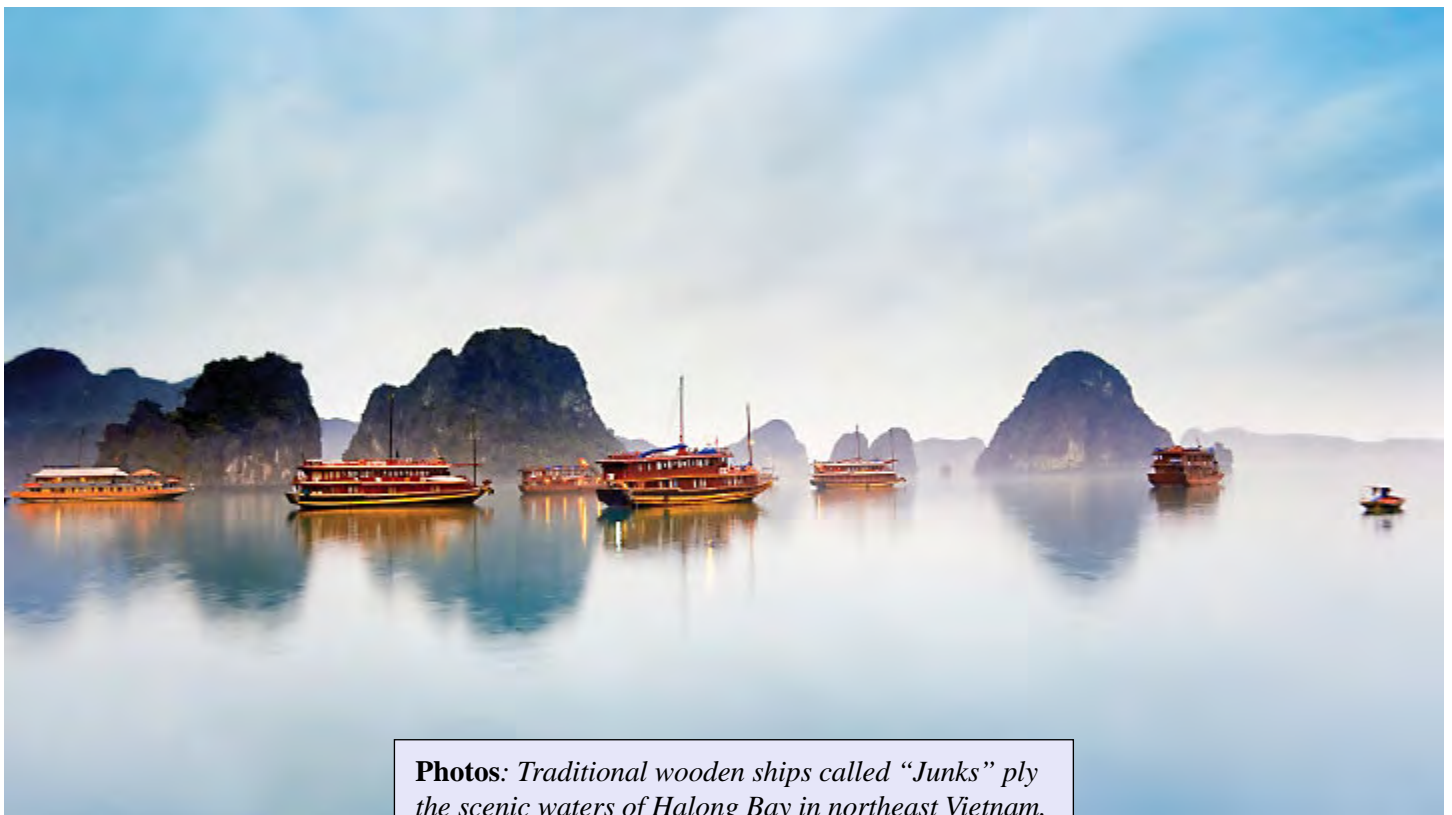
Day 17 – Mekong Delta Discovery

Day 18 – Cu Chi Tunnels Tour

Day 19 – Return to the U.S.

For more information, please read on or call the Southern Exposure office at **(269) 965-1255**.

Space for this special journey is available on a first-come, first-serve basis and is truly limited. Don't wait to make your reservations – call today. *Thank you!*



Photos: *Traditional wooden ships called “Junks” ply the scenic waters of Halong Bay in northeast Vietnam.*



Detailed Itinerary: Inside Vietnam – January 2018

Day 1 – Depart U.S.

Depart U.S. and fly to Hanoi, Vietnam

Day 2 – Arrive in Hanoi, Vietnam

Your Trip Leader greets you at the airport and escorts you to your hotel. Enjoy a free afternoon before we meet for an orientation walk around the neighborhood. We'll be joined by travelers who took the pre-trip extension to The Hill Tribes of Northern Vietnam and tonight we'll gather for a Welcome Dinner at a local restaurant.

Day 3 – Explore Hanoi / Enjoy Water Puppet Show

This morning, we have breakfast and set out on a full-day tour of Hanoi, where we'll drive through the French quarter and view the mausoleum of Ho Chi Minh, the national leader whose memory is honored here, and go inside to view the former president's preserved remains. We'll also see the distinctive One Pillar Pagoda, and stop for a visit to the Temple of Literature. Please note: The Ho Chi Minh mausoleum is closed every Monday and Friday (outside grounds and garden area will be open on these days) and normally closed from September 4 through November 5 for preservation and maintenance of the building.

After lunch at a local restaurant, we visit the Museum of Ethnology, where we'll learn about the fascinating cultural diversity of this ancient land. Please note: On Mondays, the Museum of Ethnology is closed. If our tour of Hanoi is on a Monday, our visit to the Museum of Ethnology will be replaced by a visit to Hanoi's History Museum or Fine Arts Museum.

We return to the hotel and enjoy some free time. This evening, we enjoy a water puppet show, an art form in which puppets are suspended over water, directed by puppet masters who must sit semi-submerged for hours at a time. The tradition of water puppetry is at least 1,000 years old,

REMINDER: *Space for this special journey is available on a first-come, first-serve basis and is truly limited. To reserve your place today, please call the Southern Exposure office at (269) 962-1255 at your earliest opportunity. Welcome!*

originating with peasants in the Red River Delta of the north. The puppets, which the French used to call “the souls of the Vietnamese rice fields,” are made of the water-resistant wood of the fig tree and depict villagers, farm animals, dragons, and more. Afterward, we’ll enjoy dinner together at a local restaurant.

Day 4 – Hanoi / Optional Tho Ha Countryside Tour

This morning is free for independent exploration of this fascinating city. Because Hanoi was isolated from Western development after 1954, it has a uniquely preserved concentration of French and Chinese colonial-era architecture. You may want to stroll to Hanoi’s traditional and contemporary art galleries, or visit some of the city’s other attractions, including Hoan Kiem Lake, West Lake, Quan Thanh Temple, and the Opera House.



Or you can join us on an optional tour of rural Tho Ha. Twenty miles north of Hanoi, the Nhu Nguyet River surrounds this traditional village. After a drive and brief ferry ride, we’ll discover wonderful architecture and hard-working, friendly people. The main industries here are rice paper and pig farming. After visiting a local family to see rice paper in the making, we’ll walk the village and mingle with the locals and then stop for lunch. This tour is a great opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of rural life in Vietnam.

Day 5 – Visit Bat Trang Ceramic Village

After breakfast, we depart for Bat Trang, a small village outside Hanoi known for its unique style and superior quality of ceramic pottery.

Here, we visit a workshop, where local craftspeople have been perfecting the art of ceramics for centuries. We learn about the process, from forming the clay to painting the distinctive intricate designs.

We return to Hanoi to have lunch at a local restaurant. Enjoy an afternoon at leisure to explore the city, and dinner this evening is on your own.

What’s Included in the Package

- International round-trip airfare from Detroit
- Accommodations for 17 nights
- All land transportation and 3 internal flights
- 40 meals: daily breakfasts, 13 lunches, and 10 dinners (including 1 home-hosted dinner)
- 23 small group activities
- Cruise on a traditional wooden junk
- Expert trip leader / program director
- All port charges and airport transfers
- Gratuities for local guides, drivers, ship crew and luggage porters

Day 6 – Travel overland to Halong Bay / Embark Junk (Traditional Wooden Sailboat)

After breakfast, we set off for Halong Bay—the Emerald Bay of Vietnam—a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Some of the roads to the bay are rough, but the journey offers quiet views of the flat green countryside dotted with rice paddies and small villages. We arrive in the early afternoon and transfer to a pier for our overnight cruise.

With its clear, emerald waters and mountains draped in velvety cloaks of vegetation, it’s little wonder that Halong Bay has been the inspiration for generations of Vietnamese poets. Resting peacefully across the Gulf of Tonkin near the Chinese border, this region—literally “the bay of the descending dragon”—is dotted with more than 1,600 islands, whose jagged profiles seem to rise out of nowhere.

Against the backdrop of innumerable caves, beaches, soaring cliffs, and grottoes, the Vietnamese go about their daily lives, fishing and harvesting, reaping the riches of the land and sea. Vietnamese fishermen nimbly navigate in lacquered and woven-wood coracles—lozenge-shaped, rudderless vessels that resemble an oversized tub. Oar-propelled fishing boats, or sampans, abound as well, many occupied by whole families.

Our vessel is of particular interest; we board a junk, a wooden sailboat in the traditional Vietnamese style. We stop to explore a cavernous grotto, and then drop anchor at an island pierced with surreal caverns, enjoying lunch onboard. We resume our cruise in the afternoon and enjoy dinner on our boat, where we will spend the night.

Day 7 – Fly to Hué

This morning we enjoy breakfast onboard before cruising back to the port. We drive to the Hanoi Airport for our flight to Hué, located on the central coast of Vietnam, north of Danang. We arrive in Hué this evening and transfer to our hotel. Enjoy dinner on your own tonight.

Day 8 – Explore Hué

After our breakfast at the hotel, we explore Hué, the former imperial capital, built by the first king of the Nguyen Dynasty during a time recognized as the golden age of Vietnam. For centuries, Hué has been a main cultural, religious, and educational center of Vietnam—and the reputation continues with the many students who live there today. The older section of Hué is a moated, walled citadel surrounded by eleven stone gates. We'll take a boat ride along the Perfume River to visit the unofficial symbol of Hué—the seven-story Thien Mu Pagoda. We'll also tour the citadel, find the Imperial Enclosure, and see its inner Forbidden Purple City, a private area reserved for the emperor.

Then we share a savory lunch with the Buddhist nuns at the Dieu Thanh Pagoda before returning to our hotel for some time at leisure. Tonight, we gather for dinner at a local restaurant.

Day 9 – Travel Overland to Hoi An / Cooking Class

We rise early for breakfast before our drive to the town of Hoi An, an ancient, well-preserved port town that's changed little in the past two centuries.

En route we stop at Lang Co Beach and China Beach, the setting for the eponymous TV show about a U.S. army base in Vietnam—now a peaceful 18 miles of white sand and waves. We also stop in Danang, where we'll enjoy lunch at a local restaurant before departing to Hoi An.

What to Expect: Inside Vietnam 2018

We will make every effort to accommodate your travel needs and make sure you have a pleasant, memorable experience. At the same time, it is important to note the following advisories:

■ **Pacing:** 9 locations in 18 days with one 1-night stay. International flights to Hanoi. 3 internal flights, 2 of which require early wake-up. Airport transfers in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City take about 1 hour.

■ **Physical Requirements:** Not appropriate for travelers using wheelchairs, walkers, or other mobility aids. You must be able to walk 2-3 miles unassisted and participate in 4-6 hours of physical activities each day. Agility and balance are required for embarking riverboat, junk (wooden sailboat), wooden “drawing boats,” and cable car. GCT reserves the right for our Program Directors to modify participation, or in some circumstances send travelers home if their limitations are impacting the group's experience.

■ **Climate:** Daytime temperatures range from 80-90°F, April-June are the hottest months, with high levels of humidity and heavy rains likely,

Passport & Visa Information

Your passport should meet these requirements for this itinerary: It should be valid for at least 6 months after your scheduled return to the U.S. It should have the recommended number of blank pages (refer to the handbook for details). The blank pages must be labeled “Visas” at the top. Pages labeled “Amendments and Endorsements” are not acceptable. U.S. citizens will need a visa (or visas) for this trip. In addition, there may be other entry requirements that also need to be met.

Vaccinations Information

For a detailed and up-to-date list of vaccinations that are recommended for this trip, please visit the CDC's “Traveler's Health” website at www.cdc.gov/travel. In addition, we recommend these three additional health steps before you leave on your trip:

- Have a medical checkup with your doctor.
- Pick up any necessary medications, both prescription and over-the-counter.
- Have a dental and/or eye checkup, if possible.



We arrive in Hoi An this afternoon and check into our hotel, where we'll enjoy some free time before gathering for a lively round table discussion about Vietnamese history and culture.

Tonight, we head to a local restaurant for a Vietnamese cooking class, where we'll learn the secrets to preparing some local specialties. We'll savor the fruits of our labors for dinner.

Day 10 – Hoi An / Optional Cclo-Rickshaw Ride and Thu Bon River Cruise

Today, we have breakfast at the hotel and then embark on a walking tour of Hoi An's Old Town. A well-known feature in this port town is the Japanese covered bridge with its own temple and statuary. We'll amble through the historic streets, ride the local ferry to the other side of town, and observe the Hoi An's mossy houses, including the Phuc Kien Congressional House. Most of Hoi An's historic houses have been maintained in their traditional design, with brick exteriors and wooden interiors.

And after many centuries of maritime trade, the town boasts a multicultural air: Traders from Persia, Arabia, China, Japan, and India, as well as the first Christian missionaries to reach Vietnam, have all left their mark.

After lunch at a local restaurant, enjoy an afternoon at leisure and dinner on your own. Or, join us on an optional cyclo-rickshaw ride through a rural area of Hoi An, followed by a Thu Bon River cruise. We'll travel

by cyclo-rickshaw to Cam Nam village, view Hoi An's historic cityscape from a different vantage point during a cruise along the lovely Thu Bon River, and sample a slice of daily life at the central market. We'll dine at a nearby restaurant.

Day 11 – Hoi An / Explore Champa Ruins at My Son Sanctuary

Today, we have breakfast and then travel through the rice fields of the countryside to My Son Sanctuary, Vietnam's most significant ruin from the Champa Kingdom, which prospered from the second to the 15th centuries.

My Son was established as a religious center in the fourth century in a lush, isolated valley overlooked by Hon Quap (Cat's Tooth Mountain). We walk these red-brick ruins, enjoying time to admire the delicate masonry and to take in the peace of the place. We'll return to Hoi An in time for lunch at a local restaurant before an afternoon at leisure. Dinner tonight is on your own.

Day 12 – Fly to Nha Trang / Boat Tour to Fishing Billage

This morning, we fly from Danang to the town of Nha Trang. Upon arrival in Nha Trang, we board traditional wooden "drawing boats" to visit a local fishing village on Mieu Island. The views of the water are lovely, with rocky inlets, palm-lined beaches, and refreshing breezes. Our boat tour also takes us to a beautiful beach nearby, where you can relax and enjoy lunch on your own.



Afterward, we return to the hotel for an afternoon at leisure. This evening we'll gather together for dinner at a local restaurant.

Day 13 – A Day in the Life of Xom Gio Village

This morning, we visit Dien Phu Kindergarten, supported in part by Grand Circle Foundation. We'll visit a classroom, play with the children, and have a chance to discuss local education with the school principal.

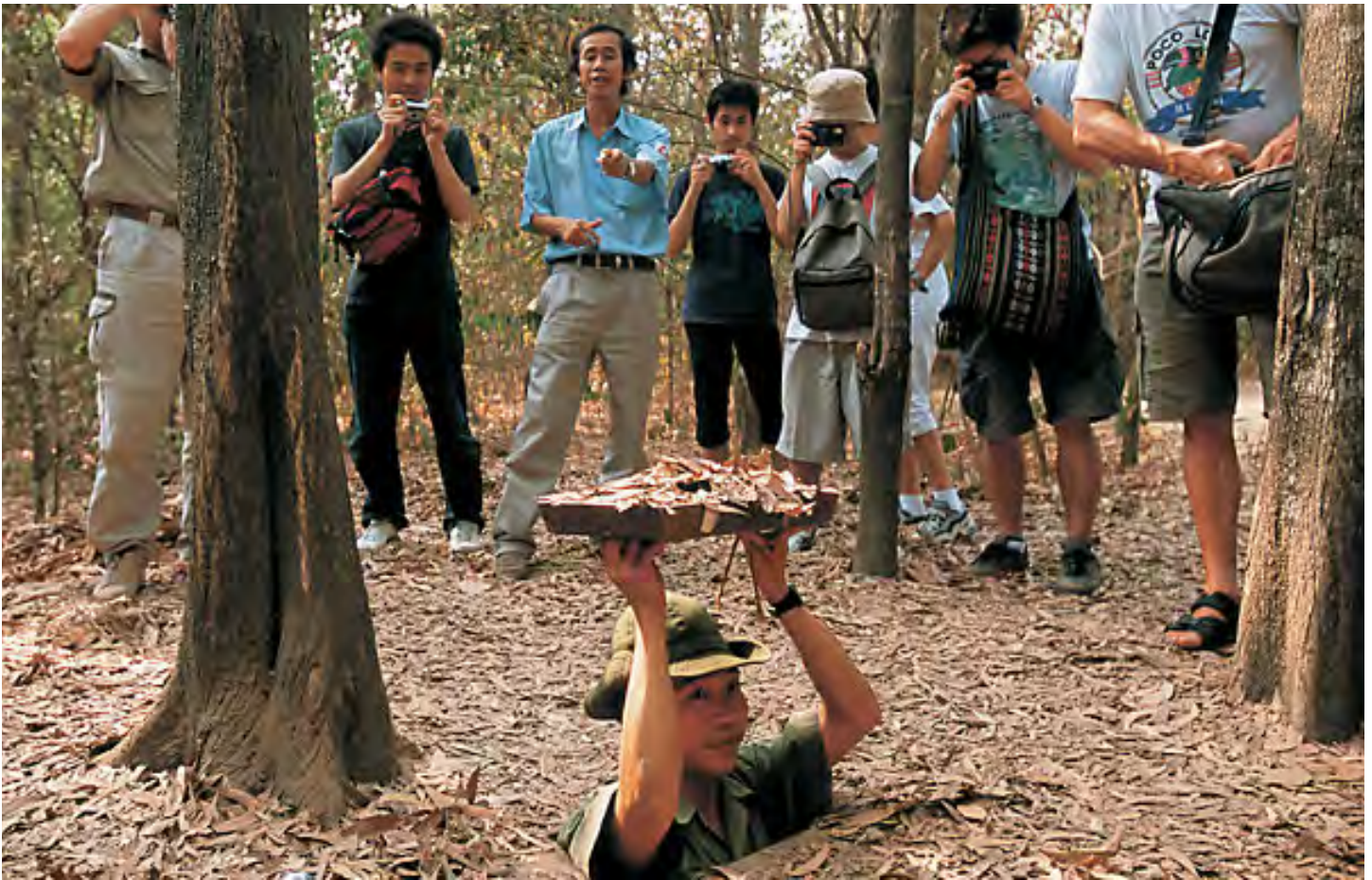
Afterward, we set out to experience A Day in the Life of the tranquil riverside community of Xóm Gio. We'll be guests of the village chief, who'll invite us into his home for a mid-morning discussion about the village's history and culture, followed by a savory lunch prepared with our help and the guidance of the chief's wife. Afterwards, we'll tour several homes that were remodeled with support from Grand Circle Foundation, visiting with families who live there. We'll learn about daily life and then be introduced to the local cottage industry—the bamboo baskets for which the village is known. Then we walk through the village, passing fields of vegetables and rice paddies on our way to a small family-run business where chopsticks are milled. On our way back to the hotel, we'll stroll through a vibrant village marketplace where you can pick up some exotic fruit for an afternoon snack. We'll enjoy some free time back at the hotel and dinner on our own this evening. Please note: On select departures, Dien Phu Kindergarten will be replaced with a visit to Minh Tu Orphanage in Huế on

TOUR RESERVATION POLICY:

Reservations can be made by calling Southern Exposure Farm at (269) 962-1255. A \$500 deposit is required to guarantee your place (check, cash or credit card accepted). Remaining balance due 90 days before departure.

Note: The information, dates and prices provided in this document are estimates only based on currently available information. Pricing and itinerary are subject to change.

Pricing Disclaimer: *Every effort has been made to provide accurate pricing information. Operator reserves the right to correct promotional or pricing errors at any time, or to increase the trip price in the event of cost increases due to changes in airfares, cruise fares, currency fluctuations, park fee increases, taxes, or fuel surcharges, or other reasons, unless you pre-paid according to the terms of the Good Buy Plan prior to the cost increase going into effect. For more information, please contact Southern Exposure at (269) 962-1255.*



Day 14 – Travel overland to Dalat / University Visit / Home-Hosted Dinner

After breakfast we travel overland to Dalat, nicknamed the “City of Eternal Spring,” admiring the rice paddies, vegetable patches, and gently sloping hills that we pass along the way. Prized by Vietnamese for its mild climate, Dalat, nestled in the mountains, was the site of the summer residence of Vietnam’s last emperor, Bao Dai. We arrive in Dalat around noon and enjoy lunch at a local restaurant before checking into our hotel.

We gather for an orientation walk around our hotel, and then set out for our visit to Dalat University. Here, we’ll learn about the Vietnamese system of education during an informative discussion with a professor and local university students.

This evening, we’ll learn more about local culture over dinner with a local family in their home. This is another chance to meet with people who call Vietnam home, learn about their daily lives, share a little of ourselves, and really experience local culture.

Day 15 – Optional Dalat Agricultural Tour / Explore old French train station / Visit Linh Phuoc Pagoda

This morning, you may choose to rise early before breakfast to explore a local market in Dalat. Enjoy the

rest of the morning at leisure with lunch on your own, or join us for an optional tour that focuses on Dalat’s agricultural production and village life. We’ll stop at a market garden to learn about flower-growing in this region. We’ll also visit a silkworm factory and discover the process of silk-making from its very beginning. Then we’ll continue on to the isolated traditional village of Buon Chuoi (Banana Village) to meet the Chil people, a hill tribe that practices subsistence farming. This tour includes lunch at a local restaurant.

In the afternoon, we all depart for our visit to Dalat’s crémaillère (cog railway) train station. Established by the French in the early 20th century, the railway linked Dalat to Thap Cham before ceasing operation in 1964 due to Viet Cong attacks. We’ll admire the Art Deco aesthetic of the station and take a 30-minute train ride to the nearby town of Trai Mat. Here, we’ll explore Linh Phuoc Pagoda, a striking Buddhist temple adorned with a mosaic of glass, pottery, and porcelain. We’ll return to Dalat in time for dinner at a local restaurant.

Day 16 – Optional Dalat Agricultural Tour / Explore Old French Train Station / Visit Linh Phuoc Pagoda

After breakfast, we head to the airport for our short flight to Ho Chi Minh City. Formerly known as Saigon, it is

now a modern seaport and the country's largest city. Upon arrival, we embark on a city tour, which brings us first to the War Remnants Museum to see its artillery and armor collection and gain a North Vietnamese perspective on the "American War." Next, we'll see the Catholic Cathedral of Notre Dame. The structure was completed in 1880 and is said to be on the site of an old pagoda. We also see the architecture of the majestic Post Office, built during the same time period and featuring two enormous murals depicting maps of Vietnam as it was many decades ago. Our tour continues to the former U.S. Embassy. After a meal of traditional noodle soup at a local restaurant, we'll check into our hotel and enjoy free time before we gather for an orientation walk around the hotel. This evening, we'll enjoy dinner together at a local restaurant in Ho Chi Minh City.

Day 17 – Mekong Delta Discovery

After breakfast, we journey outside of Ho Chi Minh City to discover Vietnam's famous Mekong Delta. We'll drive to the picturesque province of Ben Tre, where we'll enjoy a brief walk through Ben Tre village—famous for its coconut plantations—and take a sampan ride along one of the town's scenic and peaceful canals. We'll also visit a



coconut candy workshop to learn about making the sweet keo dua the region is known for, and cruise to nearby Phoenix Island, where we'll learn about the local belief started by Ong Dao Dua, known as the "Coconut Monk." Then, after lunch at a local restaurant, we'll drive back to Ho Chi Minh City, where we have some time at leisure. Dinner is on your own this evening.

Day 18 – Cu Chi Tunnels Tour

This morning, we'll explore the Cu Chi Tunnels. We'll begin in the village of Cu Chi, which sits on a vast network of tunnels stretching more than 125 miles. These tunnels allowed the Viet Cong to control a large area near the former Saigon. Many American visitors find this tour an especially emotional experience, as they discover how many North Vietnamese soldiers lived in the tunnels

during the war. After lunch together, you'll have the afternoon at leisure. This evening, we gather at a local restaurant for a special Farewell Dinner.

Day 19 – Return to the U.S.

After breakfast, we transfer to the airport in Ho Chi Minh for our flight to Los Angeles, making a connection in Taipei, Taiwan.

Pricing Summary & Trip Dates

Trip Name: Inside Vietnam 2018
Trip Date: January 2018
Exact Dates: TBD
Cost Per Person: TBD

Please Note: The per person price for our "Inside Vietnam" trip in January 2018 will be posted on this page as soon as that information becomes available.

Trip Cancellation Coverage – Information on trip cancellation insurance for "Inside Vietnam" will be made available as soon as it becomes available.

Reservation Deposit: The deposit to reserve your space on this trip is \$500 per person, fully refundable until 65 days prior to departure.

Need Help? For personal assistance or more information about this trip in the meantime, please call the Southern Exposure office during normal business hours at (269) 962-1255, Monday - Friday.

