

# Vietnam – Ho Chi Minh to Ha Long Bay



## Trip Summary

Lowland tropical rainforest. White sand beaches. Stunning ancient architecture dripping with detail. Colorful village streets bustling with locals eager to interact. You'll find all these things and more in this astonishingly exotic and utterly compelling country of breathtaking natural beauty and rich culture. Enjoy a gracious welcome into the homes of the locals in Hoi An. Hike through the jungle in Bach Ma National Park to a thundering, 900-foot waterfall. Visit the Forbidden Purple City, constructed in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century by Emperor Gia Long. Sample a host of exotic regional specialties – *pho bo*, *nom*, *banh goi*, *banh cuon* – in Hanoi's Old Quarter. Dive deep into Vietnam's scintillating display of diverse natural beauty and cultural delights on this two-week multisport adventure.

## Itinerary

### Day 1: Ho Chi Minh City

“Chào mừng bạn đến viet nam!” (Welcome to Vietnam!) • Once you arrive at Ho Chi Minh City Tan Son Nhat Airport, your driver and guide will meet you and they will transfer you to your hotel • Check-in and enjoy the rest of the day at leisure • Ho Chi Minh City is the largest city in Vietnam, with nearly 9 million people within city limits • The city is also known by its historical name, Saigon, which was in place prior to renaming the city in 1976 after the communist leader, following the Vietnam War • *Overnight Liberty Central City Point Hotel (No meals)*

### Day 2: Saigon

your senses early this morning while exploring Tao Dan Park where you can sip on an iced coffee from the local Bird Café • Walk through the picturesque gardens and watch for locals who bring their prized birds to show • Take the chance to taste pho, the national dish, and later navigate the busy streets to Cho Lon which is the Chinatown area, bustling with street vendors and captivating corners • Explore the Revolutionary Headquarters, a historical secret bunker you'll find tucked amidst plain view • Wind your way through the city to a popular rooftop restaurant that provides a delicious lunch and cityscape views • Venture further into Saigon as you experience the center of the city • Take some time to relax at the end of the day with a traditional Vietnamese tea tasting at Café Apartment, a nine-story apartment building remodeled into a modern coffee shop • *Overnight Liberty Central City Point Hotel Lodge (B, L)*

### Day 3: War Museum / Danang / Hoi An

Absorb some more interesting Vietnam history after breakfast as you wander through the War Museum, a popular Vietnam exhibit that focuses on America's involvement in the war • A short flight will land you in Danang, a city north of Ho Chi Minh City that lies on the coast • You'll be transferred to Hoi An where you'll check in to your next accommodation and head to a two-hour cooking class • There, you'll have the chance to create your own genuine local cuisine dishes! • As a group, learn about Hoi An-style preparations and mix the ingredients to prepare three dishes you'll enjoy • Your meal will also include two Hoi An specialties, White Rose and Fried Wonton, made ready by a Hoi An family • *Overnight Boutique Hoi An Resort (B, D)*



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## **Day 4: Hoi An Central Market**

Today's immersive experiences will have you ogling impressive local vendors' goods, bumping into natives who are eager to interact, and hear stories from your guide about the area • The Central Market in Hoi An is open all day, but you'll arrive early to watch vendors prepare their spaces and get the freshest produce without midday crowds • Stop at workshops, visit cultural sites, and observe locals bustling through their day • Rest for a bit while sipping a drink riverside • Hear about local life as you further explore the old town • Walk over the intricate covered Japanese bridge • Learn how to handmade a lantern from a local family • Chow down on some cao lau, a native noodle dish, to end the day • *Overnight Boutique Hoi An Resort (B)*

## **Day 5: Hoi An countryside**

Today will be spent in the fresh country air as you bike through alleyways of Hoi An and continuing to Quang Nam Province villages • Get a taste of Banh Beo, a traditional breakfast staple, and of family life and chapels • Your 90-year-old host will reminisce on his experience in what is known locally as the American War • Continue biking past rice fields, vegetable farms, and a wooden boat-building site • Stop at a traditional mat weaving shop and for a sip of rice wine distilled at a family operation • Take a ferry back to town and enjoy a complimentary drink at the Grasshopper shop • *Overnight Boutique Hoi An Resort (B)*

## **Day 6: Bach Ma National Park / Hue**

Take a scenic morning drive to Hue along National Highway 1, viewing the breathtaking Hai Van Pass, the highest and longest pass in Vietnam • Stop for pictures of Lang Co beach and later Bach Ma National Park • This park founded in the 1930s features jungles tucked into mountains, stunning beaches, and unique plant life • Take a hike to Do Quyen – Rhododendron waterfalls that thunder down from 300 meters above • Trek to Ngu Ho (Five Lakes) and swim along the jungle coast to cool off • Enjoy a picnic lunch before transferring to the summit view that looks over the landscape at 1,450 meters high • *Overnight Pilgrimage Village (B, L)*

## **Day 7: Thuy Bieu / Forbidden Purple City**

Enter into history today as you explore both peaceful countryside and magnificent royal properties • Thuy Bieu, an ancient rural village, harmoniously combines the rustic forested countryside with touches of royal legacies featured in the architecture • Come face-to-face with history as you explore monuments related to the Nguyen dynasties, the Roman amphitheater, the temple-cemetery, and the bronze casting village • Journey down the Perfume River to visit Thien Mu Pagoda, a historic temple • Finally, tour the Purple Forbidden City that was Emperor Gia Long's 19<sup>th</sup> century creation • *Overnight Pilgrimage Village (B, L)*

## **Day 8: Hanoi**

Spend the day leisurely exploring Hanoi, the lively and colorful capital of Vietnam, after a short flight • Tucked along the Red River, Hanoi serves as a multicultural hub that holds historical significance still on display through impressive ancient architecture and museums which you can visit • The city is laden with Chinese, French, and Russian influences • After touring the city independently, meet in the late afternoon to watch a performance at either Hanoi Opera House or Vietnam Tuong Theater • This performance, AOShow, is a mixture of Vietnamese music, dance, and Cirque du Soleil • Be amazed by the acrobatic feats and talents of the actors • *Overnight La Siesta Premium Hang Be Hotel (B)*

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## Day 9: Hanoi

Further explore the capital city as you watch tai chi and aerobics performed by locals near Hoan Kiem Lake this morning • Sip ca phe sua da, local iced coffee, or the 'egg coffee' before visiting a street food vendor to taste banh mi, a baguette sandwich • Witness French colonial architecture up-close as you walk through the Old Quarter, featuring St. Joseph's Cathedral • Visit Hoa Lo Prison which once held Vietnamese, American, and French war prisoners • See the US B-5 bomber airplane wreckage near Huu Tiep Lake, where you will meet the legendary Mr. Nguyen Hong My, the first Vietnamese pilot who shot down an American fighter jet in 1972 • Transition to lunchtime where you will enjoy bun cha noodle dish of pork and rice noodles • Step into the Temple of Literature founded in 1076 which served as a university for elites • Walk along the railroad tracks to take photos of the city and end the day with a beer from a bia hoi spot • *Overnight La Siesta Premium Hang Be Hotel (B, L)*

## Day 10: Lan Ha Bay

Cruise along the waters today after breakfast • Enjoy a drink onboard and have a bite to eat at L'Indochine Restaurant later for lunch as you cruise to Da Chong islet • Peer out at the heritage lighthouse before arriving at Gia Luan Lagoon • Here you can see limestone karst formations that emerge from the sea surface • Prepare to swim or kayak near shore at Ba Trai Dao beaches in Lan Ha Bay • These coasts line Halong Bay and Cat Ba Archipelago and features caves, coves, and nearly 400 limestone islands • Return to your ship to drink a cocktail while watching the golden sunset over Gulf of Tonkin • Tonight relax with a tea ceremony, massage, or Vietnamese cooking class • Fine dining includes local delicacies • Before ending the day, try squid fishing or visit the top-deck bar • *Overnight Heritage cruise, Delta Cabin (B, L, D)*

## Day 11: Lan Ha Bay

Wake up onboard to an invitation to practice Vovinam, a martial art, on the sundeck and refuel with coffee, tea, and pastries • Lan on Viet Hai Village via speedboat to bike ride or drive in an electric car through a rainforest tunnel, arriving at a rice field • Observe villagers in a national park and enjoy lunch here • Go bamboo boating or kayaking at Ba Ham Lake back at Lan Ha Bay which are surrounded by steep cliffs • Return to your cruise ship to relax the rest of the evening with a drink and enjoy the warm sunset • A chef will prepare dinner through a Vietnamese cooking class and enjoy your food in the main restaurant • *Overnight Heritage cruise, Delta Cabin (B, L, D)*

## Day 12: Halong Bay

To wrap up your luxurious vacation, float on a bamboo boat to venture through the Dark and Bright Cave, a location framed by dark craggy rocks illuminated by natural light from the openings • Return to your cruise ship to prepare for departure to the airport or your hotel • *No overnight (B)*

*\*\*Trip itineraries are subject to change without notice due to road, weather and other factors outside of our control, for the safety and enjoyment of our guests, as deemed necessary and appropriate by Austin Adventures.*



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## Activities

**Walking** – 1 to 4-hour guided walking excursions to view rainforests, wildlife, national parks, tombs, ruins and city splendors.

**Biking** – 12 miles cycling through Hoi An town with many stops along the way to check out local sights. Choose to bike through rainforest tunnels.

**Kayaking** – 2 to 3-hour paddle on calm waters in the Ba Ham Lake and Lan Ha Bay area.

**Discovery** – A long, narrow country squeezed in between the Laos and Cambodia borders and the South China Sea, Vietnam is a land of stunning landscapes that range from the lush rice terraces and forested mountains of the north to the fertile delta and lovely beaches of the south. Enter into Vietnam's high-octane Ho Chi Minh, a city driven by commerce and culture and pulsating with energy. Keep a watchful eye out for the varied flora and fauna of Bach Ma National Park home to various wildlife. Trek, swim and relax in the jungles of Bach Ma National Park on the hunt for a special backcountry waterfall. Discover the sweeping boulevards, tree-fringed lakes and ancient pagodas of Hanoi while watching the ebb and flow of motorbikes and pedestrians in this animated city. Listen to the legend of the dragon that created the 2,000 islands of Ha Long Bay with sweeps of its flailing tail. Come experience Vietnam with the leaders in adventure travel.

Your guides will take the time to explain the details of each activity, answer any questions and demonstrate the use of all equipment. Each activity has been carefully planned to include options for all levels. Most importantly, your guides will help you select the distance that's right for you.

## Meals

The hallmark of an Austin Adventures vacation is our exceptional dining. Meals are included as indicated in the daily itinerary. (B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner). Alcoholic beverages and related gratuities are not included in the trip price.

## Our Partner – Khiri Travel

Austin Adventures is proudly offering this trip in conjunction with Khiri Travel. Khiri Travel was founded in 1993 and now has offices and specialist teams in Thailand, Myanmar, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Indochina (Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos). Khiri prides itself in authentic connections, adaptability, and innovation and offers intimate, personalized travel experiences for any budget from Family Travel and Regional Highlights to Community-based Tourism and Discovery Excursions. Khiri aims to maximize the positive effects of tourism on individuals and local communities, while minimizing negative social, environmental and economic impacts. The company strongly advocates that sustainability is no longer a luxury, but a must-do so we can leave behind a world that is livable for our children. You'll find responsible travel practices at the core of all product development and operations. Khiri travel wants you to rave about your Asia experience and will be certain to provide a trip you'll always remember.

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## Distinctive Accommodation

### Nights 1 & 2: Liberty Central City Point Hotel

Embracing a fresh, urban design with 171 modern rooms and suites, Liberty Central Saigon City Point is an exceptional city hotel that unites convenience and comfort for an unforgettable experience. From the moment of arrival, guests can start spoiling themselves by some pampering time at The Spa, innovative cocktails on Above Sky Bar or refreshing with a dip in the infinity rooftop swimming pool while indulging in the breathtaking panoramic Saigon skyline views.

### Nights 3-5: Boutique Hoi An Resort

Explore the rich heritage of Hoi An at Boutique Hoi An Resort. Discover authentic Vietnamese cuisine and hospitality, unwind in the swimming pool surrounded by lush gardens, or indulge in a massage at the hotel spa. Deluxe rooms are located in the main hotel building overlooking the garden area and include an outdoor balcony.

### Nights 6 & 7: Pilgrimage Village

Pilgrimage Village boutique resort & spa is ideally located in the quiet countryside in a rustic village setting surrounded by lush tranquil gardens, yet near to famous historical landmarks and the city of Hue. Designed with premium natural material, the deluxe room combines modern comfort with traditional architecture features, with soothing views over the garden or the lily lake.

### Nights 8 & 9: La Siesta Premium Hotel

The imposing white façade of La Siesta Premium 27 Hang Be Street overlooks one of Hanoi Old Quarter's vibrant streets. In ancient times, this was where 'be' – a very basic type of wooden boat – was traded. Now the Street is buzzing with a myriad of cafes, restaurants, tailoring shops and traditional souvenir stalls. La Siesta Premium Hang Be embodies classic charm with Asian touches, traditional features and elegant period furnishings creating harmony and balance.

### Nights 10 & 11: Heritage Cruise Delta Cabin

These superior accommodations will relax your mind, body, and spirit as you travel over pristine waters. Bask in the sun, swim in the pool, enjoy a drink at the bar, or simply watch the waves below and after divulging your senses on deck, snuggle in to your first-level rooms properly fitted with comfortable beds and calming decorations. Peer out your large windows at the sea view as the sun dips below the horizon and drifts you off to sleep. Your suites also feature a private balcony to indulge in the vistas outside.



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## Arrival & Departures

An Austin Adventures representative will meet you upon arrival at the Ho Chi Minh City Tan Son Nhat Airport. Upon clearing customs, transportation to the Liberty Central City Point Hotel will be provided. On Day 12 you will be transferred from Ha Long Bay to the Hanoi Airport in accordance with your afternoon or evening flight schedule.

## Trip Price

From \$3,398 per person (\$880 single supplement)

## Trip Length

12 days / 11 nights

## 2021 Dates

Oct. 7, 2021 – Oct. 18, 2021

## Host City

Begin: Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam (SGN)  
End: Hanoi, Vietnam (HAN)

## Reservations & Availability

1-800-575-1540

*Kayak the island-speckled waters of Ha Long Bay, home to countless caves and fishing villages, before retiring to the comfort of your private small ship*

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## Trip Reservations

### Reservations, Deposits and Balances Due

To make a reservation, contact Austin Adventures with your choice of trip and dates. A \$500 per person deposit is required to confirm your reservation. **Some Custom and International programs may require additional deposits.** Full payment is required at the time of booking if your trip departs within 90 days. Choose one of the following contact methods

**Toll free:** 800-575-1540

**Phone:** 406-655-4591

**Online:** [austinadventures.com](http://austinadventures.com)

**Email:** [reservations@austinadventures.com](mailto:reservations@austinadventures.com)

**Mail:** Austin Adventures, P.O. Box 81025, Billings, MT 59108

\* You may also book your Austin Adventure with your preferred travel professional.

\*\* We accept most major credit cards and personal checks (U.S. funds made payable to Austin Adventures). Please do not send cash.

### Included in the Trip Price

- All transfers and transport as per program\All accommodation as per program (based on double/twin sharing room)
- Service of English-speaking station guides
- All meals as mentioned (B=breakfast, L=lunch, D=dinner)
- All entrance fees on tour
- Evening cooking Class in Hoi An (join-in class: 2-4 pax, private class, from 5pax up)
- Cultural performance ticket
- Domestic airfare

### Not Included in the Trip Price

- Gratuities.
- International air tickets
- Early check in/or late check-out is not mentioned above
- Insurance
- Personal expenses
- All drinks
- Visa fees and/or visa authorization
- Other expenses not mentioned on the itinerary

### Pre-departure Information

After receiving your reservation and deposit, we'll send you a pre-trip planner with general information about the area you'll be visiting, a packing list, exercise guidelines, a guest information questionnaire and a liability release agreement for you to sign and return within 10 days.



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## **Private Custom Trips**

Maybe your vacation schedule doesn't fit our list of trips and dates. Or perhaps you'd prefer a slightly different itinerary or level of luxury and activity. A Custom Adventure is the perfect answer. You pick the date and destination and brief us on the size of your group, what activities you want, your "must haves" and just how you like to relax and unwind. No detail is too small, no idea too outrageous. Our staff of experts will help create a tailor-made vacation that's just right for you and your group. In short, if you can dream it, we can make it happen.

## **Room Occupancy, Single Supplements, and Shared Room Assignments**

All trip prices are based on double occupancy. Single rooms are available for an additional charge, referred to as a "single supplement." If you're traveling alone and wish to share a room, make the request at the time of booking. Austin Adventures will attempt to find a suitable roommate for you.

## **Minimum Age**

The minimum age on our non-family designated adult and teen adventures is sixteen years old.

## **Cancellations and Refunds**

The following cancellation policies and cancellation fees are in effect:

\*\*\*As with deposits on some international and custom programs, refund schedule may vary, speak with your Adventure Consultant for details.

**Cancellation 91 days or more before trip departure** – Full trip payment refunded less a \$300 per person administration fee

**Cancellation 61-90 days before trip departure** – Full trip payment less 25% per person is refunded

**Cancellation 31-60 days before trip departure** – 50% of the trip payment is refunded

**Cancellation 0-30 days before trip departure** – No refund is given

## **Our Guarantee**

Exceeding your expectations is our number one priority. In the unlikely event that you are dissatisfied with something during your trip, immediately notify your guide(s). If he or she is unable to resolve the issue, call our main office and give us the details of the problem, and a chance to correct it. We will do our best to find a resolution. If we are unable to do so during your trip, we will work with you upon your return home to arrive at a fair and equitable solution, including up to a full refund.