

VIETNAM DISCOVERY– TRIP NOTES

TRIP CODE: TAGVS112

Valid until 31 Dec 2025

Overview

Discover the essence of Vietnam on this immersive 14-day journey from North to South, showcasing the country's rich culture, history, and breathtaking landscapes. This carefully crafted itinerary covers all must-see destinations while offering flexibility for deeper exploration at your own pace. From the bustling streets of Hanoi to the majestic limestone formations of Halong Bay, the imperial grandeur of Hue, the timeless charm of Hoi An, the dynamic energy of Ho Chi Minh City, and the lush waterways of the Mekong Delta, this tour promises an unforgettable blend of sights, sounds, and flavors, capturing the heart and soul of Vietnam.

Detailed itinerary

Day 1: Hanoi - Arrival

Xin chao! Welcome to Vietnam!

Upon arrival at the airport, you will be met and greeted by our representative who will transfer you to your hotel in the city center for check-in.

Hanoi, the capital of Vietnam is a city of rich history and culture, where you can experience the fusion of ancient traditions and modern life. It is known for its beautiful landscapes, delicious food, and bustling streets full of energy. The place is filled with sights and sounds that make it one of the liveliest cities in Asia.

During your free time on your first day in Hanoi, we recommend exploring the Old Quarter, where you can experience the city's vibrant street life, local shops, and traditional architecture. Some interesting sites recommended including the Ngoc Son temple on the Hoan Kiem Lake, Water Puppet show that depicts the unique Vietnamese traditional culture and rural life.

When it comes to food, Hanoi is a gastronomic paradise. Indulge in some of Vietnam's most iconic dishes, such as steaming bowls of pho, flavorful 'banh mi' sandwiches, and the famous egg coffee. Dive into the vibrant street food scene, where you can sample an array of flavors and textures from food stalls and small local eateries.

At 6:00 PM, you will have a group meeting with your tour guide to complete some procedures and receive briefing about the upcoming days of your tour. Following the meeting, you can join your fellow travelers for dinner and enjoy some fun activities together.

Transportation

- Airport transfer/pickup by car

Meals included

- No meals are included on this day

Accommodation

- Hotel in Hanoi

Special notes

Hotel check-in time is from 14:00. If you arrive earlier and wish to access your room before that time, you can book pre-trip accommodation when making your reservation, or let us know in advance so we can arrange it for you.

The group meeting scheduled for today is of great importance. During this meeting, you will complete essential local travel procedures, have the opportunity to meet your fellow travelers, and receive detailed guidance for the upcoming days of your tour. If, for any reason, you are unable to attend the meeting, please inform your travel agent or the hotel reception. You can also check with the hotel reception or look for a notice in the lobby for the meeting location.

Day 2: Hanoi city sightseeing

Start your day early if you wish to join locals for morning exercises. Experience the city's vibrant energy as you take part in Tai Chi, aerobics, traditional music dance, or even a friendly game of badminton. You might also enjoy a complimentary back-flapping massage from welcoming locals - a fun and unique experience!

After breakfast, embark on a guided tour of Hanoi's cultural and historical highlights. Begin at the Ho Chi Minh Memorial Complex, dedicated to Vietnam's revered leader. The site includes the Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum, the Presidential Palace, Uncle Ho's humble stilt house, and the Ho Chi Minh Museum. Within the complex, you'll also find the One Pillar Pagoda, a nearly 1,000-year-old symbol of Hanoi, standing gracefully on a single stone pillar surrounded by a peaceful garden. Next, visit the Temple of Literature, Vietnam's first national university, established in 1076. Admire its stunning traditional architecture and stroll through its serene courtyards, where nearly 100 stone stelae rest on the backs of turtles, inscribed with the names of scholars who passed royal examinations.

In the afternoon, enjoy free time to explore Hanoi at your own pace. Wander through the lively Old Quarter, shop for souvenirs, or relax at a café. If you're looking for more experiences, consider a Hanoi cooking class to learn the secret of Vietnamese cuisine or a motorbike food tour, an exciting way to discover the city's street food scene.

Transportation

- Bus

Included activities

- Ho Chi Minh Memorial Complex
- Temple of Literature
- Old Quarter walking tour

Meals included

- Breakfast

Accommodation

- Hotel in Hanoi

Optional activities

- Hoa Lo Prison: US\$ 2
- Water puppet show: US \$4
- Hanoi cooking class: US \$55

Day 3: Halong Bay cruise

After breakfast at the hotel, you'll be picked up around 9:00 AM and depart from Hanoi, heading towards the breathtaking Halong Bay. Upon arrival at the pier, board your cruise and set sail through the spectacular seascape.

A UNESCO World Heritage Site, Halong Bay is one of Vietnam's most stunning natural wonders, famous for its thousands of towering limestone islands that rise dramatically from emerald-green

waters. Shaped by nature over millions of years, the bay features pristine beaches, floating fishing villages, mysterious caves, and awe-inspiring vistas - making it a must-visit destination. Enjoy a delicious lunch on board as the cruise takes you through the bay's mesmerizing scenery. Admire the towering karst formations and soak in the tranquility of this natural paradise. In the afternoon, unwind on deck or take a refreshing swim at a secluded beach. As the sun sets, enjoy a happy hour on the top deck, watching the sky transform into stunning shades of orange and pink. The cruise will then sail to its overnight anchorage, offering a peaceful retreat amid the limestone islands.

End the day with a delightful dinner on board, and drift off to sleep under the starry sky, surrounded by the magic of Halong Bay.

Transportation

- Tour bus

Included activities

- Halong Bay cruise
- Halong bay kayaking/swimming
- Overnight on board the boat

Meals included

- Breakfast
- Lunch
- Dinner

Accommodation

- Overnight on board

Special notes

Bring with you just enough for 2 days and one night. Packing list should include passport, some money for drinks, swimming wear, sun cream, sunglasses and, of course, your camera. A light bag should be enough and your main luggage can be left in the hotel's storage.

Day 4: Halong Bay cruise – Hanoi – night train to Hue

Rise early in the morning to witness the sunrise illuminating the landscape of the Bay. Following your breakfast, get on a rowing boat to glide through the crystal-clear waters, making your way towards a natural tunnel and a captivating floating village. Immerse yourself in the serenity of these natural marvels.

Back to the mother boat and take your relaxing cruise to discover another enchanting part of the bay while lunch will be served on board.

Get back the harbor in the early afternoon (around 11.00 – 11.30, depending on the boat and tide). Disembark from the boat and make your return journey to Hanoi.

Spend your free time to wander around for shopping and dinner and this evening, you will get a transfer to the station for an overnight train to Hue.

Overnight on board the train in AC soft sleeper cabin.

Transportation

- Tour bus
- Train

Included activities

- Halong Bay boat rowing & natural tunnel explore
- Floating village
- Halong Bay boat cruise and sightseeing

Meals included

- Breakfast
- Lunch

Accommodation

- Overnight train

Special notes

The overnight train will take approximately 13 hours. You'll stay in a shared cabin with four comfortable bunk beds, equipped with soft sleepers and air conditioning. The cabin can be locked from the inside, and toilets are available at both ends of the carriage. There is also a dining car usually at the end of the train that serves simple meals and drinks. Please note that the train's speed is around 60 kilometers per hour and may be a bit noisy for those unaccustomed to train rides so, earplugs or a bottle of vodka would be great :))

Day 5: Hue – Imperial city

Arrive in Hue about 9.00AM. You will meet your tour guide at the train station then take a short transfer to the hotel where bathrooms will be available for you to freshen up. Before the official check-in time, take some time to explore the surroundings and familiarize yourself with the new environment.

Located in central Vietnam, Hue holds great historical significance as the former imperial capital of Vietnam. It is a true treasure, showcasing the country's rich royal heritage alongside its stunning natural landscapes.

In the afternoon, enjoy a guided tour of the Hue Imperial City.

Constructed between 1804 and 1832, this monumental complex served as the political hub and symbol of royal power. The fortified ramparts, spanning over 10 kilometers with a protective moat, enclose the Royal City and the Purple Forbidden City, which was once the residential area of the kings and their families. Despite the scars left by past wars, remnants of the city's royal buildings, pagodas, and monuments still bear witness to its rich history and cultural values.

Evening is free to explore Hue's nightlife at your own pace.

Transportation

- Tour bus

Included activities

- Hue - Guided tour to the Imperial City

Meals included

- Breakfast

Accommodation

- Hotel in Hue

Day 6: Hue free and easy

Today, you have the freedom to explore the captivating city of Hue at your own pace.

Located near the Imperial City, on the banks of the Perfume River, you'll find the lively Dong Ba Market. This is the largest and most bustling local market in the city, offering a diverse array of fresh local produce, specialty foods, and various souvenirs. It's a great to wander through, experiencing the vibrant sights, sounds, and enticing aromas. Don't miss the opportunity to try "Banh Khoai," a specialty dish that Hue is renowned for.

You can also choose to rent a bicycle to explore farming villages and the charming Thanh Toan Bridge, or take a motorbike tour through the backstreets and countryside (self-riding requires a

valid license). Alternatively, enjoy a dragon boat cruise along the Perfume River and visit the iconic Thien Mu Pagoda, Hue's oldest and most revered landmark.

Meals included

- Breakfast

Accommodation

- Hotel in Hue

Optional Activities

- Perfume River cruise & Thien Mu Pagoda: US\$ 10
- Bicycle rent: US\$ 2

Special notes

Please note that any optional activities you choose to undertake are done so at your own risk and responsibility. It's important to consider your personal capabilities and preferences before engaging in these activities. Additionally, it's advisable to confirm that your travel insurance provides coverage for such activities

Day 7: Hoi An ancient town

Take a bus transfer along picturesque rural lands, mountains and lagoons to the World Heritage city of Hoi An. Along the way you will make stops at the Lang Co beach and Hai Van Pass which is the highest mountain pass in central Vietnam, offering breathtaking panoramic views of the surrounding landscapes

Located along the peaceful Thu Bon River, Hoi An was a thriving trading port from the 15th to the 19th century, attracting merchants from East and West. Its narrow streets are lined with yellow-painted houses, reflecting Japanese, Chinese, and European architectural influences. The town's well-preserved heritage, vibrant traditions, and unique charm make it one of Vietnam's most beloved destinations.

This afternoon, you will embark on an orientation walking tour of the ancient town, visiting some of the city's main attractions, including the vibrant Hoi An Market, the historic Tan Ky Ancient House, the ornate communal halls, the Hoi An Museum, the iconic Japanese Covered Bridge, and so on. The rest of the day is yours to explore Hoi An. Known for its skilled tailors, the city offers custom-made clothing, with quick turnaround and a variety of fabrics. It's a great opportunity to get a perfectly fitted piece of clothing.

As the evening sets in, the city comes alive with colorful lanterns. Take a stroll along the river and join the tradition of releasing a lantern into the water, symbolizing good luck and future wishes.

Transportation

- Tour bus

Included activities

- Hoi An Old town walking tour

Meals included

- Breakfast

Accommodation

- Hotel in Hoi An

Day 8: Hoi An ancient town

Take a day to explore Hoi An at your leisure. Stroll through the picturesque streets, admiring the moss-covered rooftops and lantern-lit balconies. Stop by a local café for a café au lait or cold beer, browse the shops, or try some local dishes like Cao Lau noodles or White Rose dumplings. For a different experience, bike through the countryside to enjoy scenic rural views, or take a boat cruise along the Thu Bon River. If you're keen, join a cooking class and learn how to prepare traditional Vietnamese meals.

Meals included

- Breakfast

Accommodation

- Hotel in Hoi An

Optional Activities

- Cooking class: US\$ 35

Day 9: Hoi An – Train to Nha Trang

Breakfast is at the hotel.

Later, get transferred to the train station for an exciting day train journey from Da Nang to Nha Trang. This train journey provides you with a wonderful opportunity to witness stunning landscapes along the way, featuring beautiful rural lands, vibrant green paddies dotted with peaceful villages, magnificent lagoons, verdant hills, and captivating beaches along the coast of Vietnam.

Arrive in Nha Trang in the evening. Get picked up and transfer to your hotel. Check in and relax.

Nha Trang is a renowned seaside resort located in south-central Vietnam. This beach city is famous for its pristine beaches, consistently pleasant weather, and enchanting bay adorned with emerald waters and picturesque green islands housing protected marine life areas.

Transportation

- Station transfer/pickup bus
- Train

Meals included

- Breakfast

Transportation

- Station transfer/pickup by bus
- Train

Accommodation

- Hotel in Nha Trang

Special notes

The train's dining car serves simple Vietnamese meals, although you might prefer to bring your own lunch from Hoi An. Trolleys will also pass by with drinks and snacks, and for a cold beer or fresh coffee, head to the dining car to relax and enjoy. Since this is a public train, it's a good idea to keep your valuables in a small bag or belt and carry them with you at all times.

The air-conditioned cabin has soft sleeper bunks arranged in two levels, providing a comfortable space for sitting and enjoying the views or resting. Depending on the group size, you may share the cabin with other passengers.

Day 10: Nha Trang beach relax

Spend a leisurely day unwinding on the picturesque beaches of Nha Trang. Relax under the sun, enjoy a swim in the crystal-clear waters, and admire the breathtaking coastal views.

If you're keen to explore further, consider taking a boat excursion around Nha Trang Bay.

Alternatively, visit the Oceanographic Museum, home to diverse marine exhibits, or explore the historic Ponaga Temple, a well-preserved Cham structure. Another popular site is the Long Son Pagoda, famous for its huge, white Buddha statue.

You can also treat yourself to a rejuvenating mud bath at Thap Ba Hot Springs, perfect for relaxation and revitalization.

Nha Trang offers a variety of dining options, with numerous restaurants serving diverse cuisines, particularly fresh seafood in local eateries. Ask the hotel reception for recommendations and directions to the best spots. The city comes alive at night with neon-lit bars offering live music performances. For those who enjoy nightlife, there are also discotheques where you can dance until dawn. Whatever your preference, there's something for everyone.

Meals included

- Breakfast

Accommodation

- Hotel in Nha Trang

Optional activities

- Thap Ba Ponagar ticket: US\$ 1.5
- Hot Spring Mud bath ticket: US\$ 5

Day 11: Nha Trang beach – Train to Ho Chi Minh City

Enjoy another leisurely day on Nha Trang's stunning beaches or take the time to discover the city at your own pace. For an adventurous option, hop on a cable car for a scenic ride over the bay to Vinpearl Land, where you can have fun at the water park.

In the evening, head to the train station to catch the overnight train to Ho Chi Minh City.

Transportation

- Station transfer/pickup bus
- Train

Meals included

- Breakfast

Accommodation

- Overnight train

Optional activities

- Vinpearl land & Cable car ride: US\$ 36

Special notes

The train to Ho Chi Minh City departs in the evening so, after checking out of your hotel room you can store your luggage at the hotel's storage. If you plan to spend the entire day exploring, please check out of your room before heading out and it is recommended to leave your valuables at the hotel reception. The hotel provides public bathrooms for you to freshen up before boarding the train.

Day 12: Ho Chi Minh City sightseeing

Arrive at Saigon Station in the morning, where you'll be transferred by bus to your hotel.

Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam's largest metropolis, offers a captivating mix of old and new, East and West, where colonial-era buildings stand side by side with sleek skyscrapers. Its bustling streets are filled with activity from dawn until midnight.

After refreshing at the hotel, embark on a city tour to explore the main attractions of the city, including the War Remnants Museum, the Reunification Palace (once the Presidential Palace of South Vietnam before the reunification in 1975), the Saigon Notre-Dame Cathedral, the Saigon Post Office, and the Opera House. The morning concludes with a visit to Ben Thanh Market, a lively market offering everything from local crafts to fresh produce and souvenirs.

The rest of the day is yours to enjoy at leisure.

For those interested in learning more about the Vietnam War, an optional excursion to the Cu Chi Tunnels is highly recommended. Alternatively, food lovers can dive into Saigon's vibrant culinary scene with a motorbike tour, sampling delicious street food while experiencing the city's dynamic nightlife.

Transportation

- Tour bus

Included activities

- War Remnant Museum
- Reunification Palace
- Notre Dame Cathedral
- Saigon Post Office
- Ben Thanh Market

Meals included

- No meal included on this day

Accommodation

- Hotel in Ho Chi Minh City

Optional activities

- Cu Chi Tunnels tour: US\$ 25

Day 13: Mekong Delta explore

After breakfast, leave Saigon for an exciting tour of the Mekong Delta, often referred to as the rice basket of Vietnam.

Upon arrival, embark on a relaxing boat cruise along a small river, taking in the sights of local life along the banks. Visit a vibrant orchard, taste fresh tropical fruits, and explore workshops where you can learn about traditional coconut candy-making, pop rice production, and mat weaving. Next, take a motor cart ride through shady paths, passing coconut groves, rice fields, and vegetable farms, offering a glimpse into the local way of life.

Enjoy a delightful local lunch featuring specialties like elephant ear fish, prawns, and crispy banana flower cake. Finish your tour with a peaceful sampan ride through winding creeks lined with water coconut mangroves, before returning to the pier and driving back to Ho Chi Minh City.

As tonight marks your last evening in Ho Chi Minh City, why not join your fellow travelers for a memorable farewell dinner and have fun together. Saigon's nightlife offers something for every taste. For those who seek a vibrant atmosphere with neon lights, the Bui Vien Street and Pham Ngu Lao area are hotspots for night owls. If you're looking for a more refined experience, visit Eon Heli Bar atop Landmark 81, Vietnam's tallest building, where you can enjoy breathtaking panoramic views and expertly crafted cocktails.

Transportation

- Tour bus
- Boat

- Motor cart

Included activities

- Mekong River cruise
- Motor cart ride through villages
- Sampan boat rowing

Meals included

- Breakfast
- Lunch

Accommodation

- Hotel in Ho Chi Minh City

Day 14: Ho Chi Minh City - Departure

Today is the departure day of your trip, and no activities are organized. Make the most of your free time to unwind, relax, do some last-minute shopping or simply taking a leisurely stroll. After checking out, you will be transferred to the airport for your departure flight. Safe travel and looking forward to seeing you again soon!

Meals included

- Breakfast

Transportation

- Airport transfer by car

Special notes

The hotel's check-out time is 11:00 AM. If your departure flight is later and you would like to extend your stay in the room, please inform us in advance so that we can book the room for you. Alternatively, you can store your luggage in the hotel's storage and use the public restroom. If you plan to stay longer in Ho Chi Minh City, we can assist you in arranging post-trip accommodations and activities. Additionally, if you are interested in exploring other countries in the region, we encourage you to explore our tour list for suitable set departure dates that can be combined with your current trip.

Trip Style: Standard

This style is designed with great flexibility to ensure that you can enjoy your experience most with a reasonable budget. Whilst it is built for adventure-minded people, this tour style focuses on active exploration, uncommon landscapes, and local cultures. Accommodations in these trips are normally tourist standard 2 or 3 stars. Guest houses and homestay with a local family are also used in these trips to enhance your local experience. Apart from included activities, you also have some free time to explore the place on your own way. Transports used on these trips are normally by buses and trains with public buses also sometimes used.

Joining & group size

Group tours allow you to meet and connect with others, adding fun and enriching your local experiences. During the trip, and at certain locations, you may join other travelers for specific activities. To ensure quality, group sizes are limited to no more than 16 people, except on larger cruisers or public transportation.

Most day tours and excursions are directly organized and operated by Travel Authentic Asia. Occasionally, some activities may be conducted by our trusted local partners, following agreed-upon standards. In such cases, Travel Authentic Asia guarantees the quality of your trip and takes full responsibility for addressing any issues or complaints with our local service providers on behalf of our customers.

Physical Grading: 2/5

This tour is suitable for most fitness levels. Nothing is too challenging.

Price inclusions

Meals: 11 breakfasts, 3 lunches, 1 dinner

Transport: Bus, train, boat

Accommodation: Hotels (10 nights), Overnight boat (1 night), Overnight train (2 nights)

Included activities: Hanoi: Ho Chi Minh Memorial Complex, Temple of Literature, Old Quarter walking tour; Halong Bay: Halong Bay cruise & overnight aboard, Halong bay kayaking/swimming, Halong Bay boat rowing & natural tunnel explore; Hue: Royal Citadel & Forbidden city; Hoi An: ancient town walking tour; Ho Chi Minh City: War Remnant Museum, Reunification Palace; Mekong delta: Mekong River boat ride, Motor cart ride through villages, Sampan boat rowing

Price exclusions

Visa, International flights in and out the country, Laundry, Personal expenditures, Travel Insurance, Tips, Other than mentioned in the trip notes & itinerary.

Optional activities

In addition to the activities included in the day-to-day itinerary, you may also pursue your own interests and adventures during your free time by participating in optional activities, where available.

Please note that optional activities are not necessarily endorsed or recommended by Travel Authentic Asia, nor are they included in the price of the trip. Participation in any optional activities is at your own risk. It is important to understand that your decision to participate is entirely yours and does not form part of your contract with Travel Authentic Asia. For some optional activities, you may be required to sign a waiver or receipt.

Dossier & Itinerary Disclaimer

These trip notes have been compiled with the itinerary and are updated regularly with the most reliable info on local travel facts. For the itinerary, though trying very much to adhere to the route, we cannot say that the local travel conditions stay unchanged so, a certain level of flexibility is requested in case of any alteration need to be made to fit with local circumstances.

Please ensure that you read well and have a copy of these trip notes before your departure in case there have been changes that affect your plans.

Tour guide

During your trip, you will be guided by tour guides specific to each region. This ensures you receive the benefit of their deep knowledge of the area's history, culture, and hidden gems, making your experience richer and more authentic. Their familiarity with local customs and practices will enhance your understanding and connection to the destination.

Tour guides will manage all organized activities, including pickups and drop-offs when necessary. However, they may not accompany you at all times, giving you the freedom to explore independently when desired.

For your peace of mind, our operations team and 24/7 customer care service are always available. You can reach us easily via phone, WhatsApp, or Messenger to ensure any concerns are promptly addressed.

Meals on tour

When traveling with Travel Authentic Asia, you'll have the opportunity to experience a wide variety of delicious cuisine unique to each country you visit. While some meals are included in the trip price, you will also have the freedom to choose where, what, and with whom to dine, based on your own budget and preferences. This flexibility allows you to explore local food at your own pace.

Your tour guide will offer restaurant suggestions throughout the trip, and group members are welcome to dine together or explore their own culinary choices for privacy and personal enjoyment.

Transportation

Most of the vehicles used during the trip are air-conditioned and designed for tourist comfort. For short distances or specific activities, we occasionally incorporate local transportation options, such as taxis, tuk-tuks, or cyclo, to offer a more authentic travel experience.

In certain cases, domestic or regional flights may also be arranged to save time or accommodate long-distance travel efficiently.

For overnight train journeys, we use local trains with air-conditioned, 4-berth compartments featuring lockable doors. These cabins are shared with fellow travelers or, occasionally, with other passengers not part of the group. During peak travel seasons, when availability is limited, 6-berth compartments may be provided as an alternative.

Accommodations

Our accommodations on this trip are typically 2- or 3-star hotels, offering comfortable stays throughout the trip. The standard check-in time is 14:00 PM. If the group arrive early in the morning, we will arrange a day room for showering and luggage storage. While we always strive to have rooms ready upon our arrival, if we arrive close to the standard check-in time, this isn't always possible, meaning that check-in may not be immediate at some hotels.

In larger, more populated cities, hotel rooms tend to be smaller compared to those in smaller towns, and some rooms may not have windows due to high population density. Although hotels are of the same standard, facilities may vary slightly depending on the location.

Single Travelers

On our joined group trips, you will typically share a room with another group member of the same gender. However, if you are traveling alone and there is no one else available to share the room

with, you may be required to pay a single supplement. Alternatively, you have the option to pay for a single supplement in advance to ensure that you have your own room throughout the trip. Please note that single supplements are not available for overnight trains or local homestays.

Start-Ending-points

Starting point:

Hanoi HM Boutique Hotel

3 Hang Dau street – Hoan Kiem - Hanoi – Vietnam

Phone: +8424 3266 8586

The hotel is located in the Old Quarter of Hanoi, very close to the Hoan Kiem Lake and within walking distance of Hanoi's interesting sights. Rooms are air-conditioned and have an en suite bathroom.

Notes: If local conditions require a change to the starting hotel, we will select an alternative of the same standard and notify you via email at least one month before your arrival to ensure you arrive at the correct location.

Arrival complication

If you are unable to commence your group trip as scheduled, please contact your starting-point hotel and leave a message for your tour guide.

Upon arrival at the airport, you will be greeted by our representative holding a sign with your name and our company logo in the arrival hall. Please note that neither the driver nor the representative will request additional payment. If you cannot locate our representative or have concerns about your transfer, contact our hotline at +84 903432999 or +84 912221442 for immediate assistance.

To ensure a smooth airport transfer, please provide your flight details at least 14 days before your departure. If the transfer (included in the tour price or booked as an extra service) or any portion of your trip is missed due to a flight schedule change without prior notice, no refund will be issued. Any additional costs incurred to rejoin your group will be your responsibility.

If you need to arrange your own taxi from the airport to the starting-point hotel, metered taxis are available at the airport's ground-floor exit gates. Alternatively, you can approach airport taxi service counters managed by uniformed staff. To ensure a safe and reliable service, seek assistance from airport security or staff. Avoid unsolicited offers from taxi touts claiming to have metered taxis parked outside the airport.

Ending point

Liberty Saigon Parkview Hotel

265 Pham Ngu Lao Street, District 1, Ho Chi Minh City

Tel: +84 28 3837 0772

Centrally located in the tourist hub of Saigon – Ho Chi Minh City, from the hotel it is convenient to find restaurants, bars, and other tourist venues. It is within walking distance of many of the area's main attractions such as Ben Thanh Market, Reunification Palace, Post office, and so on.

Money

The official currency of Vietnam is the Vietnamese Dong (VND). According to government regulations, all prices for goods and services must be quoted in VND. Foreign currencies can only be exchanged through authorized exchange bureaus or used with special permission.

In practice, USD is widely accepted in tourist areas and is often considered a secondary currency. Other foreign currencies, such as EUR, AUD, and GBP, are also accepted in some locations, though less commonly. In tourist hotspots, establishments like restaurants, bars, travel agencies, and souvenir shops may accept both USD and VND, with prices sometimes displayed in both currencies. However, outside tourist areas or in remote regions, only Vietnamese Dong is accepted. During your trip, it's best to carry a mix of VND and USD for convenience. Ensuring that any bills, particularly USD, are in good condition without tears or excessive wear, as damaged bills may be rejected. Vietnamese Dong (VND) can be easily withdrawn from ATMs, which are widely available on street corners throughout the country. Having both currencies on hand ensures you are well-prepared for transactions in both tourist hubs and more remote areas.

Tipping

Tipping is not compulsory, but it is greatly appreciated. If you are satisfied with the service provided, offering a tip is a meaningful way to show your appreciation. It is especially significant to those who take care of you during your travels and helps inspire excellent service. Tipping should be given directly to the recipient.

Here are some suggested tipping amounts based on local practices and feedback from previous travelers:

Local Restaurants: If dining alone, a tip of around US\$2 is appropriate. In more upscale restaurants, tipping ranges from 10% to 15% of your bill. For group dining, a collective tip of US\$5 to US\$8 is suggested, depending on the group size.

Drivers: For a single traveler, a tip of US\$5 is recommended. For a group, a total tip of US\$10-15 per day is appropriate.

Tour Guides: Tipping for guides depends on the level of service, and US\$2-4 per person per day is typical for group tours. Free to tip more as you see fit. The amount is entirely up to your discretion based on service quality.

Visas

Visas are the responsibility of the individual traveler. Visa requirements vary depending on your nationality and destination. Generally, most countries require that your passport be valid for at least six months beyond your intended stay. Upon arrival, you may be asked to show return tickets and proof of sufficient funds to cover your stay.

Travel Authentic Asia offers e-visa and visa-on-arrival services, which can be arranged by booking the additional service when you make your tour reservation or by contacting us via email.

For more details, please visit our website at: <https://travelauthenticasia.com/travel-guides/vietnam/how-to-get-a-visa-for-vietnam.aspx>

What to bring

What you need to bring will depend on the trip style, the countries you are visiting, and the time of year. Generally, we recommend packing as lightly as possible. You'll be expected to carry your

own luggage on excursions, though you won't be walking long distances with it. We suggest keeping the weight under 20kg/44lbs.

You can choose to carry your luggage in a backpack or suitcase, but with wheels is most convenient. An overnight bag or a small backpack with a shoulder strap is useful for carrying essentials like water and a camera on day trips.

Depending on the season and the activities included in your trip, be sure to bring appropriate clothing. In winter (November to February), North Vietnam can be cold, so warm clothing is necessary. During other times of the year, light and comfortable clothing will be sufficient. If your trip involves trekking, make sure to bring trekking shoes or sandals. You'll find that most items can be purchased locally at reasonable prices, so there's no need to pack everything; only bring the essentials.

Health

There are no specific health requirements for this trip. However, we recommend consulting your doctor for up-to-date medical travel advice before departure. It's a good idea to bring along a basic First Aid kit, hand sanitizers, antibacterial wipes, and any personal medications or medical items you may need during your journey.

Safety and Security

Before departure, we encourage you to seek advice on international travel safety and familiarize yourself with potential situations you may encounter during your trip. Traffic can be more chaotic than what you're accustomed to at home, so take your time to adjust to the new environment. Your tour guide and locals are great resources to learn how to navigate local traffic safely.

For added security, we recommend using a neck wallet or money belt to store your passport, air tickets, travelers' cheques, cash, and other valuables. Only carry the amount of money you'll need for the day, and leave the rest in the hotel's safe. We also suggest using a lock to secure your luggage.

While the cities visited are generally safe during the day, we advise caution when wandering at night. It's best to stay in small groups and take taxis to and from restaurants or on evening excursions.

In certain situations, your tour guide has the authority to amend or cancel any part of the itinerary for safety reasons.

If engaging in water activities in oceans, rivers, or open water, be aware that waves and currents can be unpredictable. All participants should be able to swim and have experience in open water, and we recommend seeking local advice before entering the water.

For more information, please visit our website's travel guides.

Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is mandatory for all Travel Authentic Asia travelers and must be obtained independently. It is your responsibility to carefully review your insurance policy before traveling to ensure it provides adequate coverage for personal accidents, medical expenses, evacuation and repatriation, baggage loss, and cancellation or curtailment of your trip. Please note that any local travel insurance included in sightseeing tickets at certain sites is limited and does not replace comprehensive travel insurance. Travelers with pre-existing medical conditions must confirm that

their chosen insurance policy covers these conditions. If such conditions are not covered, it is understood that the traveler assumes full financial responsibility for any issues or costs arising from treatment or complications related to their pre-existing medical condition. Travel Authentic Asia is not liable for any problems, delays, or expenses resulting from such conditions.

Responsible travel

At Travel Authentic Asia (TAA), we operate with a strong commitment to Responsible Travel. We believe that both tour operators and travelers play a vital role in making the world a better place. By traveling responsibly, we not only contribute to the advancement of tourism but also enhance the overall travel experience.

Responsible travel is not an abstract concept; it is reflected in the actions, behavior, and appearance we exhibit every day during our travels. With small efforts, each of us can make a significant difference in the places we visit.

Issues on your trip

While we always strive to provide the best possible holiday experience, we understand that travel can sometimes present challenges due to local conditions or unforeseen circumstances. If something goes wrong, the best way to address the issue is by discussing it with your tour guide or one of our travel consultants or customer care personnel. This allows us to resolve the problem and minimize any negative impact on the rest of your trip.

We acknowledge that there may be situations where a tour guide or our local partners may not be able to resolve an issue to your satisfaction. If that occurs, please feel free to reach out directly to our travel consultant or management team via chat or email, and we will do our best to assist you.

Trip review & feedback

After traveling with us, your feedback is invaluable in helping us improve our services and ensure a better experience for you and future travelers. You are the best person to tell us what we need to do to meet your expectations. Therefore, your comments and suggestions are highly appreciated.