

Below is the proposed itinerary for the trip. As is true on any adventure travel trip, plans for any specific day may be modified due to weather considerations, unforeseen circumstances, new opportunities, and group interests.

DAY 1

Arrive in Hanoi, welcome and introductions

Welcome to Vietnam! Our trip begins today in Ha Noi, one of Asia's most picturesque cities and the capital of Vietnam. Plan to arrive at Noi Bai International Airport before 2 PM. Our group will officially meet at 4 PM at the hotel. We'll start getting to know each other, review our plans for the trip, and then enjoy our first of many delicious shared meals.

**Included Meals:** Dinner  
**Accommodations:** Hanoi Pearl Hotel or similar  
**Travel Time:** Driving (50 minutes)

DAY 2

Explore Hanoi like a local

We will get an early start today, as is the local custom, and head towards Hoan Kiem Lake. This freshwater lake, located in the heart of the city, is a peaceful spot where many locals—especially women—begin their morning routines and practice tai chi. As we cross the iconic Rising Sun Bridge to visit the Ngoc Son Temple, we'll try to spot one of the endangered large soft-shell turtles, which is considered quite auspicious. Afterwards, we'll stop at a charming coffee shop to try Vietnamese iced coffee, or if you're feeling more adventurous, an egg coffee!

Continuing our walking tour, we'll explore Hanoi's Old Quarter, with its picturesque crooked lanes, charming colonial architecture, and the enticing aromas of street food—it's a sensory delight! We'll stop along the way for a traditional lunch before visiting the Temple of Literature. Built in 1076, the Temple of Literature housed Vietnam's first university and functioned for 700 years, educating royalty, mandarins, and members of the elite. Its gardens and well-preserved architecture offer a fascinating glimpse into Vietnam's past. Next, we'll visit the Vietnamese Women's Museum, and if time allows, the Hoa Lo Prison. Our day concludes with a refreshing draft beer—bia hoi—and a tasting of some of the delicious local specialties.

**Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner  
**Accommodations:** Hanoi Pearl Hotel or similar  
**Daily Activities:** Walking tour of Hanoi

DAY 3

Transfer to the mountainous region of Sapa, visit a Red Doa village

Today, we head north to the mountainous region of Sapa! The drive takes about 5 hours in our comfortable, private van. This region is famous for its welcoming ethnic minority groups, vast rice paddies, and is home to Mount Fansipan, the tallest peak in Indochina. It's also quickly becoming a premier trekking destination in Vietnam.

We'll arrive at Tonkin Escalade in time for lunch and settle into our rooms for the next two nights. Nestled in the mountains of Hoang Lien National Park, about 45

We'll arrive at Topas Ecolodge in time for lunch and settle into our rooms for the next two nights. Nestled in the mountains of Hoang Lien National Park, about 45 minutes from Sapa town, Topas Ecolodge is a Certified "Unique Lodge" by National Geographic. After lunch, we'll stretch our legs with a 2.5-3 hour walk to a Red Dao village. The Red Dao women are easily recognizable by their distinctive red triangular-shaped turbans and shaved heads and eyebrows. They are known for their beautiful handmade embroidery and basket weaving. We'll have the opportunity to meet the local women and learn about their culture before hiking back to Topas Ecolodge for dinner.

**Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

**Accommodations:** Topas Ecolodge

**Daily Activities:** Walk to Red Dao Village (3 hours)

**Travel:** Driving (5 hours)

## DAY 4

### Hike Hoang Lien National Park and visit two villages

After a peaceful morning enjoying the sunrise from your prime viewpoint atop the mountain, we'll pack up and head to explore a more remote part of Hoang Lien National Park.

Today's trek will begin near Sin Chai village in the high mountains, where the trail passes waterfalls and deep valleys. Our first stop will be at the Red Dao village of Nam Nhiu, where we'll take a brief break to learn about their agrarian lifestyle and visit a few homes. We will then follow a small dirt trail dotted with bamboo huts, which are used by local farmers during the harvest season. We'll arrive at Nam Cang village in time for lunch at the Topas Riverside Lodge, set against a jungle backdrop and connected to the village by a suspension bridge—one at a time, here!

After lunch, we'll visit Nam Cang village to learn how the locals make rice paper, jewelry, and their vibrant embroidery. If the sun is out, we may also take a swim in the river before transferring back to Topas Ecolodge for the afternoon. The rest of the afternoon is free to relax in the infinity pool or schedule a traditional Red Dao herbal bath at the spa.

**Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

**Accommodations:** Topas Ecolodge

**Daily Activities:** Hiking (3.5 hours), Visit Nam Nhiu and Nam Cang Village

**Travel:** Driving (2 hours)

## DAY 5

### Travel to the top of Mt. Fansipan, return to Hanoi

We'll have our last morning with our new friends at Topas Ecolodge before packing up and journeying to the top of Mt. Fansipan. Once we arrive in Sapa town, we'll board the Muong Hoa mountain train for a short, scenic ride to the Fansipan cable car station, which boasts the longest cable car in the world with the highest elevation gain. We'll take a private cable car to the base of Mt. Fansipan and then either climb the final 600 steps or take the funicular to reach the summit.

After taking our time to explore the summit, we'll retrace our steps back to Sapa for lunch. After a wonderful few days in the mountains, we'll transfer by private bus back to Hanoi for a restful night.

**Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

**Accommodations:** Mount Fansipan Hotel



**Accommodations:** Hanoi Pearl Hotel or similar  
**Daily Activities:** Summiting Mt. Fansipan via cable car  
**Travel:** Driving (5 hours)

DAY 6

Sail in Ha Long Bay

Today, we set out to sea! We'll make our way northeast to Ha Long Bay. Designated a World Heritage Site in 1994, we'll enjoy a premier view of its natural beauty aboard our own private junk—a type of ancient Chinese sailing ship.

After a welcome drink and safety briefing, we'll check into our cabins, freshen up, and then sit down for a specially prepared Vietnamese lunch while cruising towards the Cap La fishing village and several islands.

We'll take our time exploring the beautiful emerald waters, towering limestone cliffs, and fascinating karst islands, with options to kayak, swim, or stretch your legs on a short hike. At sunset, we'll return to the boat and sail towards our overnight anchorage in Bai Tu Long Bay.

After dinner, we'll have the opportunity to try our hand at squid fishing!

**Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner  
**Accommodations:** Dragon Pearl Junk  
**Daily Activities:** Optional Kayaking, Swimming, or Hiking  
**Travel:** Driving (2 hours)

DAY 7

Explore Bai Tu Long Bay, Tai Chi, Kayak & Swim

We'll start our day with a Tai Chi lesson on the sun deck, the perfect way to begin the morning. After breakfast, we'll visit the Thien Canh Son Cave to learn more about the history of Ha Long Bay. We'll then transfer to a smaller boat to reach the Vung Vieng fishing village, a peaceful area ideal for kayaking and swimming.

While enjoying a fresh seafood lunch, we'll cruise to our next destination, Vung Ha, where we can swim and kayak again through the stunning Karst Mountains. Back on the boat, we'll celebrate our last night on the water with a sunset party.

**Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner  
**Accommodations:** Dragon Pearl Junk  
**Daily Activities:** Optional Tai Chi, Kayaking, Swimming

DAY 8

Cooking Demonstration on Boat, Bid Farewell to the Bay, Fly to Cambodia

On our 8th morning on the junk, we'll start with a tai chi lesson on the sun deck. Ending our packed day will provide our bodies with a Western-style breakfast on

Our peaceful morning on the bay begins at sunrise with a tai chi lesson on the sundeck. Feeling refreshed, we will nourish our bodies with a Western-style breakfast or the option to savor pho, a traditional Vietnamese dish.

Afterward, there will be some free time to explore Bai Tu Long Bay before enjoying one final meal aboard the boat—a traditional Vietnamese lunch, which will include a cooking demonstration. We will then bid farewell to Ha Long Bay and make our way back to Hanoi for an early afternoon flight to Cambodia.

Upon arriving in Siem Reap, Cambodia, in the late afternoon, we will transfer to our hotel to settle in. Dinner will be at the exceptional Jaya House River Park hotel, where we will stay for the next three nights.

- Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations:** Jaya House River Park Hotel
- Daily Activities:** Visit Vung Vieng Fishing Village, Travel to Cambodia
- Travel:** Boat (1 hour), Driving (30 minutes), Flight (2 hours)

**DAY 9**

**Full Day Exploring Angkor Archeological Park, Cambodian Circus**

Today, we will explore the world-famous Angkor Archaeological Park, one of the largest and oldest religious monuments in the world. After a short tuk-tuk ride from our hotel, we will spend the day discovering its vast network of temples, which date back to the 9th to 15th centuries during the Khmer Empire.

We'll begin at the South Gate of Angkor Thom, with an optional short walk to a hidden temple, followed by visits to several other temples. Midday, we'll take a well-deserved break and enjoy an invigorating lunch at Marum restaurant.

After lunch, we'll continue our journey at the iconic jungle temple of Ta Prohm before dedicating the rest of the afternoon to exploring the main temple, Angkor Wat, meaning "Temple City" in Khmer. Constructed in the early 12th century and mysteriously abandoned two centuries later by the Khmer civilization, Angkor Wat is now one of Cambodia's most iconic attractions.

After a full day of walking through the Angkor complex, we'll return to our hotel to freshen up before heading to Chanrey Tree restaurant for dinner. But the day doesn't end there! A visit to Siem Reap wouldn't be complete without experiencing a performance by Phare, the Cambodian Circus. Founded in 1994 by eight young Cambodians returning from refugee camps along the Thai border, Phare is a non-profit arts organization providing education and professional training to local youth. This high-energy performance, filled with emotion, enthusiasm, and talent, is sure to leave a lasting impression.

- Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations:** Jaya House River Park Hotel
- Daily Activities:** Full day walking city tour, Cambodian Circus

**DAY 10**

**Visit Angkor Centre for Conservation of Biodiversity, hike along the River of a Thousand Lingas**

Today, our journey through the fascinating history of the Khmer Empire continues at what is considered its birthplace—Phnom Kulen National Park. We will drive approximately 1.5 hours north of the city, stopping first at the Angkor Centre for Conservation of Biodiversity, Cambodia's first nature conservation center. During our

visit, the knowledgeable and passionate staff will guide us through their efforts to rescue, rehabilitate, breed, and release native wildlife, as well as provide an up-close look at the animals in their care.

Next, we'll hike along the River of a Thousand Lingas to a stunning waterfall, where you can take a refreshing swim or dip your feet in the cool waters. Along the way, we'll learn about the Lingas—symbols of fertility—carved directly into the stone riverbed. These sacred waters hold deep significance for the Cambodian people, as they flow downstream to Angkor Wat. If time permits, we may also visit a massive reclining Buddha statue at the mountain's summit.

Before heading back to Siem Reap, we'll enjoy a local Khmer lunch and take some time to soak in the serene surroundings.

The remainder of our unforgettable journey will be spent in Siem Reap. This afternoon, you'll have time to unwind at the beautiful Java House River Park or explore a local market in town to pick up some final souvenirs. In the evening, we'll gather for our farewell dinner at The Square 24, a restaurant known for its exquisite modern Khmer cuisine. Be sure to save room for this fantastic meal!

- Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations:** Jaya House River Park Hotel
- Daily Activities:** Sightseeing/Walking
- Travel:** Driving (3 hours)

**DAY 11**

**Departure Day**

You are free to depart at any time today. Your transfer to the airport is included, and your guide will ensure you leave in time to catch your flight. Please note that hotel check-out is at 12:00 noon.

- Included Meals:** Breakfast
- Travel:** Driving (1 hour)