

# **An Historic & Cultural Journey Through Vietnam**

## **Day 1 Departure From London**

Depart London on our flight to Vietnam with a plane change en route.

## **Day 2 Arrive Hanoi**

After landing at Hanoi's Noi Bai Airfield (heavily bombed during the American war), we board our private motor coach and cross the Red River and its dikes to explore the Hanoi environs. We will visit the War Museum, which focuses mainly on the French and American wars. We conclude the afternoon with a visit to the Hoa Lo Prison (Hanoi Hilton) and we will view the John McCain Memorial. This evening we will enjoy a Welcome Dinner.

## **Day 3 Hanoi**

Today we will arise before dawn to experience the city coming alive. We will walk around Hoan Kim Lake and learn of its legend. We will view the people of Hanoi, from toddlers to the very elderly, arriving for their morning exercises. We return to the hotel as the sun comes up and enjoy our first breakfast in Vietnam. Today we visit the Mausoleum to view Ho Chi Minh lying in state. Our morning will also include visits to the Ho Chi Minh House and Museum, the One Pillar Pagoda and the Temple of Literature (Vietnam's first university, founded in 1100). This afternoon will be free to shop, relax, or roam the city at your. After Dinner we will enjoy the water puppet show

## **Day 4 Hanoi - Flight To Phu Bai - Hue - Quang Tri City - Dong Ha**

This morning we will take a flight to the old, American military airfield at Phu Bai. We will then take a private coach to Hue (the old Imperial Capital of Vietnam), for lunch. This afternoon we retrace the path of the 1968 Tet Offensive southern battle for Hue. This highly important battle marked the first time street-to-street urban warfare had taken place since the battle for Seoul, South Korea in 1950. Our afternoon continues with a brief stop at Quang Tri City and the Lew Puller School, before reaching our hotel in Dong Ha.

## **Day 5 Dong Ha - Vinh Moc - Hue**

This morning we journey to the mystical Rockpile, where we will take a short hike to the Razorback (keep an eye out for rock apes). Along the way our guide will point out other sites of military importance during the war, including the Four Gates to Hell, the Khe Gia Bridge, Vandergrift Combat Base (LZ Stud), the Da Krong Bridge, and the Hairpin. We continue with a visit to Peace Bridge, which spans over the Song Ben Hai River, the only true physical demarcation between North and South Vietnam. Our day continues to Vinh Moc, where we will explore the Underground Village and Tunnel Complex, which remains virtually untouched since the American war. We return to Dong Ha for lunch, before continuing south to Hue, famous for its university and known for open and radical thinking. Hue is also home to the high school that graduated Ho Chi Minh, Giap, and Diem. We check into our hotel on the southern bank of the Perfume River, where we can enjoy the hotel pool. After dinner, we can explore the fascinating shops on Le Loi Street late into the evening.

## **Day 6 Hue**

This morning we cross the Perfume River for a visit to the Citadel, featuring spectacular ramparts and towers. Our guided visit will explore sites specific to the northern battle, including the Dong Ba Gate and the Phase Lines. We will conclude the battle study at the Imperial Palace gate blown by the Marines, which allowed the ARVN to enter and lower the NVA flag that had flown from the main flagpole for 24 days. We continue with a visit to the Forbidden City, home to the 13 Nguyen emperors. After lunch, we take a relaxing Cruise on a Dragon Boat up the beautiful Perfume River to the Thien Mu Pagoda and the Royal Tombs.

### **Day 7 Hue - Da Nang – Hoi An**

This morning we travel south on Highway One, stopping for various photo opportunities, before heading up the Hai Van Pass (pass of the clouds). We will stop at the top to explore the old French bunkers, and for a stunning panoramic view of Da Nang and the bay. Our guide will be sure to point out Vietnam's last leprosy village. Our day continues with a visit to Red Beach, where the Marines first landed in 1965, before stopping to view an amazing Sitting Buddha monolith. After lunch, we will visit the Cham Museum to learn about the ancient Daiviet Kingdom. Next we climb Marble Mountain and visit the Viet Cong hospital area located deep within the mountain. Tonight we will enjoy dinner in a local restaurant.

### **Day 8 Da Nang - Trakieu – Son My**

Today we will make an early start as we head south, making brief stops at points of interest, before reaching the village of Son My (the location of the infamous My Lai Massacre), now an Open-air Museum. We journey deep into the countryside to the ancient capital of Trakieu, where we will visit the My Son Holyland, site of Cham Ruins that date back to the 5<sup>th</sup> Century. We return east to the ancient port town of Hoi An, formerly known as Faifo, where we will have free time to roam the streets of this old port-of-call, where ancient Dutch, Portuguese, Chinese, and Japanese traders once walked. After lunch, we visit a Woodcarving and Silk factory, the Japanese Covered Bridge built in 1593, and some very important Temples. We will have the opportunity to explore Hoi An's intriguing little shops after dinner.

### **Day 9 Danang - Flight To Ho Chi Minh City**

Today we take a late morning flight to Ho Chi Minh City, still called Saigon by most Vietnamese. Upon our arrival, our day will include visits to: Reunification Hall, the former Presidential Palace; Ben Thanh Market; Notre Dame; Vinh Nghiem Pagoda; and Cholon, Saigon's China Town. After dinner, we will stroll along the old Tu Do Street near our hotel to explore wonderful little shops.

### **Day 10 Tay Ninh & Ho Chi Minh City**

This morning we journey to the Tay Ninh Province, where we will visit the great Cao Dai Holy See Temple and observe the Noon Ceremony. Next, we ride to the top of Nui Ba Den (Black Virgin Mountain), an eerie 3000' monolith rising from a flat plain, before visiting the Cu Chi Tunnels. We return to Saigon this afternoon, where we will visit Cha Tam Church, where President Diem fled and disguised himself as a priest during the coup. It was from the church that Diem was captured, then removed and murdered. This evening, we enjoy a Cruise on the Saigon River to Binh Quoi Village for our very special Farewell Dinner and Show.

### **Day 11 Departure From Ho Chi Minh City**

This morning we bid farewell to Vietnam and transfer to Thon San Nhut Airport for our flight to London with a plane change en route.

### **Day 12 Arrive London**

Arrive back in London today.