

## *Vietnam by boat and bike*

**From Chinese emperors to colonisation by the Europeans, this is a fascinating journey through time. Past, present and future will intertwine and present you with a wonderful contrast between tradition and modernity. You will discover the natural and cultural beauty of this country, the bay of Halong, traditional villages and have heart-warming encounters, the Imperial city of Hue and the Perfumed river... A unique experience for the senses.**

### **Day 1: Hanoi**

Meet the group at the airport. Departure to Hanoi with Vietnam Airlines.

### **Day 2: Good morning, Vietnam**

Welcome at Hanoi airport by your guide and transfer to your hotel by bus. Free time to relax and to familiarize yourself with the country. In the afternoon, a walk is planned so that you can discover the historic district of Hanoi. Welcome dinner and night in the hotel.

### **Day 3: Mai Chau about 30 km**

Today you travel to Mai Chau through the spectacular mountains of the north, where you will be amazed by the beauty and the peacefulness of the countryside. Departure from Mai Chau on a magnificent bike ride. Lunch with the locals. In the afternoon you continue your ride through well preserved typical villages with their traditional houses on stilts and along the shimmering rice terraces in the Mai Chau valley.

Transfer by bus to Pom Koong, where you will attend a traditional dance performance and spend the night in a house on stilts.

### **Day 4: Tam Coc about 25 km**

After breakfast, bus to Nho Quan. Your ride today takes you to Tam Coc, through spectacular countryside. You stop in Kenh Ga for lunch in a small local restaurant. Your ride continues through amazing uspoilt countryside with splendid views until you reach an area of limestone rocks in Hoa Lu. You continue to Tam Coc.

In the evening you can experience a very different type of massage, one done by blind people. In doing so, you will support a foundation which helps handicapped people become more self-sufficient.

### **Day 5: The Red River about 30 km**

In the morning visit Halong bay by boat. You will sail in the bay and see the mysterious rocks and the paddy fields close up. Drive to Ha Long where the cycling circuit starts. Discover the provinces of the Red river delta, in the heart of one of the most beautiful and lush landscapes of Vietnam. In Thai Binh province, you ride to the Keo Pagoda on the banks of the Red river. The bell tower of this pagoda is a wooden masterpiece, representative of the architecture of Vietnam in the seventeenth century. Arrival and overnight stay in Ha Long.

### **Day 6: Halong-Bay**

After breakfast at the hotel, you will board private boats for a half-day cruise in Dragon Bay. Legend has it that the exceptional landscape of this bay was due to dragons who went into the sea to domesticate the marine currents. Struggling against the currents, they cut the mountain with their tails, and as the water level rose, only the highest peaks remained emerged. In Vietnam dragons are considered wonderful and beneficial creatures, Visit to one of the most beautiful caves in the bay. Lunch of seafood and fresh fish. Back on solid ground, drive to Hanoi with a break en route to visit the village of Dong Trieu, noted for its handcraft production of pottery, ceramics and lacquers. You will then attend a puppet show on water. Overnight stay in Hanoi.

### **Day 7: Hanoi**

City excursion in the morning. Discover the charming lake of the Restored Sword, where you will be told the legend of the turtle and the sword, dating from the 15th century. The visit continues with a trip to the Temple of Literature. Visit to the Tran Quoc Pagoda and Quan Thanh Temple and the Ethnographic Museum in the afternoon. Comfortable overnight stay aboard the Blue train to Hue.

### **Day 8: Huë**

**20 km**

Arrive in Hue in the morning, transfer by bus to the hotel. Relaxing morning and lunch in a local restaurant. Bike ride in the old Imperial capital. Visit the Forbidden Citadel, built on the same plan as the Forbidden City of Beijing. The architectural ensemble has been registered as a World Heritage of Humanity site since 1993. Back to the hotel by bike.

### **Day 9: Huë about 30 km**

Leave the hotel by bike to visit the tomb of Emperor Tu Duc then drive to Thuy Bieu, an ancient village on the Perfume River, between the city of Hue and the tombs of Tu Duc and Minh Mang. The village is known for its high-quality grapefruit plantations that were offered to kings and royal families. Walk around the village, and admire the peaceful and beautiful landscapes of Hue: paddy fields, fruit trees, gardens and temples. See handmade incense production and discover the life and work of the farmers. Lunch at Thuy Bieu on the edge of the river. You then embark aboard a boat for a calm cruise on the Perfume River. Visit the typical Thien Mu Pagoda which is the symbol of Hue. Return to the village by boat. Overnight stay in Hue.



### **Day 10: Hoi Anspoilt**

Depart from Hue by bus to reach Hoi An via the famous "Mandarine Route". From the "cloud pass", you will enjoy a fantastic panoramic view of the city of Da Nang, its surroundings, and the beach below. Visit to the Cham museum. Arrival in Hoi An in the afternoon. Free time. Night at the hotel.

**Day 11: Hoi An about 40 km**

Visit the old town of Hoi An on foot and see the Old Japanese Covered Bridge, built by the Japanese community in the late 16th century to connect them to the Chinese on the other side. Visit the old house of Phuc Kien and take the opportunity to stroll through the local market. Afternoon dedicated to cycling in the Hoi An countryside with a relaxing break on the beach of Cua Dai, before cycling back to the hotel.



**Day 12: Hoi An**

Free day. You can just relax on the beach or go for an excursion in the area.

**Day 13: Hoi An – Saigon**

Transfer to the airport for a short flight to Saigon. Upon your arrival you can enjoy a guided tour of the city and its Central Post Office as well as Thien Hau Pagoda located in the heart of China Town.

**Day 14: Mekong Delta**

The bus will take you to the heart of the Mekong Delta, formed by 9 tributaries of the Mekong River also known as the "rice bowl" or "paradise garden" of Vietnam. Board a boat at Cai Be for a cruise on the Mekong to the village of An Hoa. The landscape here is completely different from anything you've seen in Vietnam, but still captivating and exotic. Arrive at the Mekong Lodge Hotel and leave in the afternoon to explore the orchards of Tan Phong Island, Discover old houses and taste different varieties of tropical fruits. Overnight stay at Mekong Lodge in Cai Be.

**Day 15: Cai Be - Tra On about 25 km**

Wake up to the sound of the floating market, one of the most fascinating in the Mekong Delta with hundreds of small boats jostling for space while the owners try to sell their goods. In the afternoon, back on solid ground for a very pleasant bike ride on country roads. Discover the orchards and the work of the fruit farmers of the region,

**Day 16: Tra On - Can Tho - Saigon 25 km**

After breakfast, the cruise continues followed by a transfer to Saigon.

**Day 17: Saigon**

Free time in the morning before transferring to the airport in the afternoon.

**Day 18:**

Departure.



**Guided tour  
18 Days / 17 Nights**

**Grade:** ● - ●●

Easy and short biking days, on asphalted secondary roads and non-asphalted farm roads.

**Date :** 08.03. - 25.03.2019  
15.11. - 01.12.2019  
06.03. - 23.03.2020\*

Price per person	Euro
Double room half-board	3.032,00
Single room half-board	3.332,00

**Minimum participants: 10 Maximum : 22**

**The tour includes:**

- ✓ Flight from Frankfurt to Hanoi
- ✓ Flight from Saigon to Frankfurt
- ✓ Internal flight from Danang to Saigon
- ✓ 12 nights in hotels, mainly with air conditioning
- ✓ 1 night in a stilt house
- ✓ 1 night in a 4 person couchette compartment
- ✓ 1 night on the boat in a double cabin with air- conditioning
- ✓ Daily breakfast
- ✓ 11 x Lunch
- ✓ 5 x Dinner
- ✓ France à vélo guide
- ✓ Tour guide
- ✓ 1 support vehicle for the whole tour
- ✓ All mentioned boat transfers
- ✓ All mentioned transfers with mini-bus
- ✓ All entrance fees
- ✓ Water puppet show in Hanoi
- ✓ Dance demonstration in Mai Chau
- ✓ 21-Gang Mountain bike (very comfortable)
- ✓ Handlebar bags for bikes
- ✓ Road book, maps, and information material

**\* Season supplement 50.00 €**

The visa fee (25.00 US\$), is not included in the price and must be paid on arrival.

The weather in Vietnam can be very different in the south, north or centre of the country.

The best time to travel is from November to May. The temperatures are usually between 20° and 35°C.