

10DAYS _ Vietnam Culinary Delights

Vietnam (Hanoi – Halong Bay – Da Nang – Hoi An – Ho Chi Minh – Cu Chi – My Tho)

1. OVERVIEW:

Taste Vietnam through an adventure of delicacies and authentic arts of Vietnamese cooking. You will gain a delightful insight of ancient Hanoi through a tour to sample most popular yet refined food, snacks and drinks of Northern Vietnam. In the old town of Hoi An well-known as a world's heritage for its charming antique architecture, you will learn how to cook a Vietnamese-style delicious lunch under the guidance of an experienced chef with ingredients handpicked by yourself from a local market. On the outskirts of Ho Chi Minh City, a home-hosted lunch with a warm-hearted family will bring you into a close touch with the Southerners' lifestyle. The tour will also treat you to ample enjoyment other than food including the magnificent Ha Long Bay where you will have an overnight boat tour, unique majestic relics in the former imperial city of Hue, the Cu Chi tunnels famous as a symbol of unimaginable Vietnamese vitality in war times and so much more.

2. ITINERARY IN BRIEF

DAY 1: HANOI ARRIVAL	(D)
DAY 2: HANOI – STREET FOOD	(B)
DAY 3: HANOI – HA LONG	(B/L/D)
DAY 4: HA LONG – HANOI- HUE	(B/L)
DAY 5: HUE – DA NANG – HOI AN	(B/L)
DAY 6: HOI AN – COOKING CLASS	(B/L)
DAY 7: HOI AN – FREE DAY	(B)
DAY 8: HOI AN – DA NANG – HO CHI MINH	(B/-/D)
DAY 9: HO CHI MINH – HOME HOSTED LUNCH IN HOC MON	(B/L)
DAY 10: HO CHI MINH – DEPARTURE	(B)

3. THE TOUR

DAY 1: Hanoi – Arrival

Arrive at Noi Bai International Airport, meet your driver for an airport transfer with a private vehicle and English speaking guide. The driving distance is approximately 45 minutes.

Your visa should be pre-arranged, or be sure that your visa-on-arrival letter is in your carry-on luggage. Please go to custom desk as your first point of entry into the country and present these documents for visa upon arrival.

Afternoon, start a city tour beginning with the Ho Chi Minh Complex which features the life of Ho Chi Minh, the nation's founder. At the complex, visit the Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum, where the nation's founder's body is preserved (closed on Monday, Friday and through October - November), the colonial Presidential Palace, originally the French Governor Office and a fine example of French architecture in Hanoi, and the rural style Ho Chi Minh's house on stilts

where Ho Chi Minh lived and worked. Stop by one of Hanoi's icons, the One Pillar Pagoda, built in the 11th Century in dedication to Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara or Buddha of Compassion and reminiscent of a lotus blossom rising from a pond. Continue to the Temple of Literature, known as the first university of Vietnam built in 1070 by the Ly Dynasty to honor Confucius, sages and outstanding Vietnamese scholars. Dinner at a local restaurant

Meals: Dinner

Accommodation: overnight at hotel in Hanoi (3*, 4* or 5*)

DAY 2: Hanoi – Free Day

Full day free at leisure or take our optional tour. Car and guide are available at your disposal.

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation: overnight at hotel in Hanoi (3*, 4* or 5*)

OPTION TOUR: ½ DAY STREET FOOD WITH AMERICAN CHEF DANIEL HOYER

PRICE: US\$ 88 per person (min 2pax) based on Seat and Coach tour (SIC)

PRICE: US\$ 140 per person (min 2pax) based on private tour

Hit the streets of Hanoi for a full day street food tour with American chef and culinary instructor and food writer, **Daniel Hoyer**. A Hanoi resident and author of five cookbooks, Daniel leads gastronomic adventure tours in Latin America and Southeast Asia. He will have much insight to share with you about Vietnam's food, culture and daily life during the tour.

At 8:30 AM, Daniel and your private driver will pick you up at your hotel. Start the tour with a typical Vietnamese breakfast either with the famous beef or chicken and rice noodle soup also commonly known as "Pho" or another popular breakfast dish of sticky rice with savory toppings known as "Xoi". Next, drive a local market to learn about some ingredients used in local cuisine and observe Vietnamese buying and selling practices. Mid-morning, enjoy a Vietnamese coffee or tea with locals at one of Daniel's favorite sidewalk cafes, in the historic French Quarter. Proceed by car or on foot to Truc Bach Lake for a snack of Pho Cuon, rice paper rolls containing grilled beef and fresh herbs and served with fish sauce. Lunch with Daniel at one of Hanoi's popular restaurants serving traditional Hanoian specialties of grilled pork with round rice noodles "**Bún Chả**" and crispy fried spring rolls "Nem Rán".

End the street food tour at a local beer bar which serve fresh draft beer "**Bia Hơi**" and snacks. Bars as such are favorite socializing spots for city people during afternoon throughout evening. Sit at low-slung, plastic tables on small stools among locals and taste some Vietnamese beer with accompanying snacks if you still have room for it and talk about your day. While relaxing here, Daniel will give you some recommendations as to eating around Hanoi and the rest of the country. (Another traditional café can be opted instead of beer bar depending on guest preference).

Back to your hotel around 03:45 PM before visiting the peaceful **Hoan Kiem Lake** (Returned Sword Lake whose name originated from a legend of a sacred sword) with Ngoc Son Temple right on the lake.

Note: Tour to be confirmed based on Daniel's availability

Notes:

Tuesday and Friday will be available for combined group bookings at a lower price than private bookings. (single bookings are allowed but there is a 2 pax minimum to run the tour) These are daytime tours beginning at 10 am.

- Combined group bookings will be limited to a maximum total of 8 pax to ensure an intimate, personal experience for the guests.

Private tour bookings are available on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturdays (Daniel Hoyer will no longer accept single bookings for private tours, 2 pax minimum)

DAY 3: HANOI – HA LONG

Morning pickup at 8:00 AM from your hotel for transfer to Ha Long Bay, which is about 160 km or 3 hour drive away. On the way, you will see some rural areas of the Red River Delta with plenty of chances to take photos of Vietnamese farmers working in paddy fields. Stop half way to visit a handicraft workshop of fine clothes and embroidered paintings.

Arrive in Ha Long City at 11:30 AM and check in aboard the booked junk when your journey across Ha Long Bay starts. Ha Long Bay meaning Descending Dragon Bay in Vietnamese as legend has it that it was where a holly dragon landed down from sky. The bay, famous as one of the world's wonders and heritage sites whose formation dates back 500 million years, consists of around 2,000 karst islands and islets scattered over an area of 1,553 km².

After the welcome drink is served, start cruising while having lunch on board and enjoy the mighty bay view. Ha Long Bay meaning Descending Dragon Bay in Vietnamese as legend has it that it was where a holly dragon landed down from sky. The bay, famous as one of the world's wonders and heritage sites whose formation dates back 500 million years, consists of around 2,000 karst islands and islets scattered over an area of 1,553 km². The bay cruise will continue with up close sighting of **Dinh Huong Island, Ga Choi Island, Dog Island, Sail Island**, a visit to **Sung Sot Cave** and swimming stop at Titov Beach. Relax to enjoy the bay view at sunset, have dinner after, go fishing at 09:00 PM and spend a night on board.

Meals: Breakfast/ Lunch/ Dinner

Accommodation: overnight on Wooden Junk in Ha Long Bay

DAY 4: HA LONG – HANOI – HUE

Early risers can enjoy the splendid yet tranquil view of the bay at the crack of dawn. Breathe the sea's fresh air, feel the morning breeze and hear the sounds of birds above. Have breakfast and cruise to visit Human head shaped island and Tortoise Island. Continue to cruise into Bai Tu Long Bay to discover the adjacent bay of "**The Little Dragon Bowing to His Mother**" as it is named. Check out and have lunch on board while heading to shore. Disembark and transfer back to Noi Bai International Airport for domestic flight to Hue. En route, stop to visit But Thap Pagoda in Bac Ninh province whose architecture and sculpture works are rated as the finest of Vietnam's classical Buddhist art back in 17th Century.

Arrive in Hue after a 1 hour and 15 minutes flight, welcome by our guide and transfer to your hotel.

Hue, **the former Imperial Capital** of Vietnam for the 1802-1945, is the last refuge of Vietnamese feudalism. It is known as a city of poetic beauty that blends a scenic landscape characterized by the Perfume River and surrounding mountains with an extremely rich historical legacy typified by numerous relics such as citadel, tombs and pagodas.

Meals: Brunch

Accommodation: overnight at hotel in Hue (3*, 4* or 5*)

DAY 5: HUE – DA NANG – HOI AN

Morning, take full day tour of Hue City, the former Imperial Capital of Vietnam for the 1802-1945 period and the last refuge of Vietnamese feudalism. The city's beauty is characterized by a natural scenic landscape and an extensive variety of historical relics. Begin with Hue

Citadel, a well-known UNESCO-recognized World Heritage Site which is a 520 ha fortress-like grand complex built in the early 1800s and featuring three enclosures separated by heavy ramparts namely Kinh Thanh Hue (Civic City) as the outer, Hoang Thanh (Royal City) as the middle and Tu Cam Thanh (Forbidden City) as the inner. Continue to Khai Dinh Tomb, the burial site of Vietnam's second-to-last king, and the most elaborate compared to other kings' tombs. The tomb shows a vivid European influence in architecture despite its Asian style. Next, visit Tu Duc Tomb, one of the Nguyen Dynasty's finest architectural works nested in a pine forest where the 4th emperor of the Nguyen family was laid to rest. Lunch at local restaurant

Afternoon, transfer South to Hoi An via Hai Van Pass (Ocean Cloud Pass). Enjoy a stunning headland-and-bay panoramic view from the pass, which for miles hugs the mountainside along the shoreline and overlooking the Pacific Ocean. Stop en route in Da Nang City to visit **the Museum of Cham Sculpture, China Beach and Marble Mountains**, whose peaks represent the five basic elements of the universe. Arrive in Hoi An, welcome by our guide and check in your hotel. Once a bustling maritime commercial port of Asia between 15th and 19th centuries, Hoi An is now a peaceful town of exceptionally well-preserved architecture, lifestyles and traditions. The town, being a UNESCO-recognized World Heritage Site, exemplifies a fascinating fusion of cultures between Vietnam and the outside world including China, Japan, Thailand and the Philippines.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Accommodation: overnight at hotel in Hoi An (3*, 4* or 5*)

DAY 6: HOI AN – COOKING CLASS

Morning meet our guide at your hotel and transfer out to a local market. A guide from the local cooking school will take you on a tour through the market to learn about the ingredients to be used in your recipes. After the market, board a boat to ride along Hoi An river for about 25 minutes, watching local fishermen casting nets as part of their daily routine. Arrive at a small township and walk to the cooking school. The class starts in an open-air pavilion by the river under the instruction of an experienced chef. Observe, practice, sample and bring out a good lunch cooked the local style to your own taste. Enjoy it yourself.

Afternoon, take a town tour of Hoi An to see its beauty up close. Included for your sightseeing will be **the town's iconic 400-year-old Covered Bridge** with a small temple attached to one side as a prominent example of Japanese architecture, the Museum of Trade Ceramics which is an elegant Vietnamese style wooden house built in 1858 showcasing antique ceramic artifacts, the 200-year-old **Tan Ky House** typifying an ancient Chinese merchant residence, **the Ong Temple** built in 1653 by Chinese settlers to worship Guan Yu, an ancient Chinese general whose character stands for loyalty, bravery and justice. Enjoy strolling the small streets of antique low tile-roofed houses, which reflect the town's multi-cultural past.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Accommodation: overnight at hotel in Hoi An (3*, 4* or 5*)

DAY 7: HOI AN – FREE DAY

Full day At leisure.

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation: overnight at hotel in Hoi An (3*, 4* or 5*)

OPTION: FISHING LIFE & WATERWAYS: US\$ 45/ Pax (min 2pax)

This short eco-tour is designed for you to learn about the Vietnamese fishermen's daily life with a hands-on experience. Arrive at a local dock and board a fishing boat. Cruise down the river toward the estuary for a predetermined fishing spot. Stop and start fishing with a popular local daily fishing tool, the round fishing net. A local fisherman will teach you how to cast and retrieve the net. Next, learn how to paddle the unique Vietnamese round bamboo basket boat and join in a boat race. Explore the tranquil coconut-flanked waterways and help to clean up garbage from some coconut groves.

DAY 8: HOI AN – DA NANG – HO CHI MINH

Morning, free at leisure until transfer to Da Nang airport for flight to Ho Chi Minh City
Flight time is approximately 1.5 hours.

Meet your driver for an airport transfer with a private vehicle and guide. The transfer distance is approximately 30 minutes

Afternoon, we start the tour with a visit to the War Remnants Museum which features a comprehensive collection of the machinery, weapons, photos, and documentation of Vietnam War with the both the French and Americans and the Reunification Palace which was the former residence of the President of South Vietnam until end of April 1975. Last, stop for shopping at the French-built Ben Thanh Market which dates back to 1870 and whose main entrance clock tower has become a city's symbol.

Dinner aboard a boat cruising Saigon River while enjoying a traditional music show.

Meal: Breakfast, Dinner

Accommodation: Overnight at hotel in Ho Chi Minh (3*, 4* or 5*)

DAY 9: HO CHI MINH – HOME HOSTED LUNCH IN HOC MON

Morning, meet your guide and transfer about 75 km North-west of downtown Ho Chi Minh City. Discover the famous Cu Chi Tunnels, which were once a major underground hideout and resistance base of Viet Cong forces during the two wars against the French and the Americans. The tunnels, entirely hand-dug, formed a highly intricate network of interlinked multilevel passageways at times stretched as far as the Cambodian border and totaling over 120 km in length. Its complexity was beyond imagination containing meeting rooms, kitchens, wells, clinics, schools, depots, trenches and emergency exits all aimed for guerrilla warfare. The tunnels were deep and strong enough to withstand destructive bombings and self-contained enough to outlast prolonged sieges.

Proceed to a small village in Hoc Mon District, which is well known for betel and areca tree growing. Ride a horse-pulled carriage for about 20 minutes to a traditional house. Enjoy a home-hosted lunch at the house and chat with the warm-hearted host about the traditions and life of Saigon suburban people. Transfer back in town of Ho Chi Minh City. Rest of the day is At leisure.

Meal: Breakfast, Lunch

Accommodation: Overnight at hotel in Ho Chi Minh (3*, 4* or 5*)

DAY 10: HO CHI MINH – DEPARTURE

Leisure time until transfer to airport for flight departure.

Meal: Breakfast

4. EXTENSION TOURS:

Add-on beach relaxation or tours to neighbor countries; Laos, Vietnam & Myanmar

5. PRICE: All rates are per person sharing DBL or TWN/FB Basis, in US dollar, net and non-commissionable.

Date: 01 Oct 2015 – 30 Apr 2016

Description	2 pax	3-4 pax	5-6 pax	7-9 pax	Single Supp
First Class	908	775	655	654	+260
Superior packages	1,151	1,018	898	897	+452
Deluxe packages	1,521	1,388	1,268	1,266	+771

Date: 01 May 2015 – 30 Sept 2016

Description	2 pax	3-4 pax	5-6 pax	7-9 pax	Single Supp
First Class	953	814	686	680	+247
Superior packages	1,172	1,033	905	899	+408
Deluxe packages	1,495	1,355	1,228	1,221	+715

Date: 01 Oct 2016 – 31 Dec 2016

Description	2 pax	3-4 pax	5-6 pax	7-9 pax	Single Supp
First Class	965	825	698	691	+259
Superior packages	1,231	1,091	964	957	+467
Deluxe packages	1,572	1,432	1,305	1,298	+777

SURCHARGE FOR FLIGHT TICKET

Note: Subject to be changed without prior noticed

- From Hanoi (HAN) to Hue (HUI): US\$ 115 per person
- From Da Nang (DAN) to Ho Chi Minh (SGN): US\$ 115 per person

WHAT IS INCLUDED

- Accommodation in a twin or double room with daily breakfast
- Lunch or dinner as specified in the itinerary
- One night cruise on a wooden junk in Ha Long Bay
- Cooking class fees
- Services of a driver and private air-conditioned vehicle during all tours and transfers.
- Experienced English-speaking guide during all tours and transfers
- Vietnam visa approval letter on arrival as complementary
- Private board for sightseeing as mentioned in the program, Entrance fees for all visits as mentioned in the itinerary
- Mineral water is available as complementary

WHAT IS NOT INCLUDED

- International & Domestic flight tickets
- Meals, if not specified in the itinerary
- Optional tour

- Gratuities for guides and drivers
- Visa stamping fee at the airport (45US\$ in Vietnam paid by cash at the airport)
- Travel insurance (we highly recommend that you purchase adequate insurance)
- Personal expenses, such as laundry, telephone, drinks, etc. All other services not specified in the itinerary
- All other services not specified in the itinerary

LIST OF HOTELS USED:

Destination	First Class – 3 star	Superior packages – 4 star	Deluxe packages – 5 star
Ha Noi	LAROSA HOTEL - www.hanoilarosahotel.com / (Superior)	THE ANN HOTEL - www.theann.com.vn (Deluxe)	INTERCONTINENTAL HANOI WESTLAKE - www.intercontinental.com/hanoi (Superior)
Ha Long	ORIENTAL SAILS - www.orientalsails.com ; Superior	PELICAN CRUISE - www.pelicancruise.com Deluxe Ocean View	PARADISE CRUISE - www.paradisecruises.vn Deluxe (ROH)
Hoi An	LOTUS HOI AN - www.hoianlotushotel.com (Superior (European Market))	HOI AN TRAILS - www.hoiantrailsresort.com.vn (Superior)	PALM GARDEN RESORT - www.palmgardenresort.com.vn (Superior Garden View)
Hue	ASIA HUE HOTEL - www.asiahotel.com.vn (Deluxe)	MUONG THANH HUE HOTEL - www.hue.muongthanh.vn (Deluxe City View)	PILGRIMAGE VILLAGE - (Deluxe)
Ho Chi Minh	SONNET SAIGON HOTEL www.sonnetsaigonhotel.com (PREMIER DELUXE)	EDEN SAIGON HOTEL - www.edensaigonhotel.com (Deluxe Room)	MAJESTIC SAIGON HOTEL www.majesticsaigon.com.vn (Colonial Superior)

IMPORTANT NOTE:

- All prices are quoted in USD/ per person, based on Double/Twin occupancy
- Supplement for standard Vietnamese menu meals: US\$ 14 for lunch & US\$ 18 for dinner in case you want to book extra meal with us.
- Private services & daily departure
- Quotation is quoted based on English speaking guide: Surcharge for other guide
 - Supplement for German Speaking guide: USD 15/day per group
 - Supplement for Spanish Speaking guide: USD 20/day per group
 - Supplement for Italian Speaking guide: USD 35/day per group
- Surcharge for Compulsory dinner for Xmas and New Year Eve
- Surcharge for Peak Season at above mentioned hotels (if have)
- Surcharge for Vietnamese Lunar (TET) New Year from 6 – 14 Feb 2016 - 25% of adult prices

FREE OFFER

- Mineral water is available during transfers
- Vietnam visa approval letter on arrival (this fees isn't refundable even clients don't need)