

Spirit of Vietnam: From Historic Saigon to Northern Serenity



DAY 1: ARRIVE IN SAIGON

(D)

Saturday

Welcome to Saigon, Vietnam's biggest and busiest city, home to 15 million people. Upon arrival, walk through the immigration fast-track lane to get your luggage and be welcomed by Vietnamese girls in traditional dress with flower garlands. Get on your private limousine van and transfer to your hotel in downtown Saigon.

Your afternoon adventure will start with a panoramic rickshaw ride through Saigon's colonial-era sites, including the Saigon Opera House, City Hall, Notre Dame Cathedral, the Central Post Office, the old French headquarters, and Ben Thanh market. Enjoy your sunset refreshment drink at a celebrity rooftop Chill Sky bar on the 27th floor, followed by a private dinner at one of the best restaurants in town, The Mandarine.



Icon Saigon Hotel has a perfect location in the heart of Saigon, with the Saigon River (7 mins walk), the Saigon Opera House (3 mins walk), and Ben Thanh Market (10 mins walk), Chill Sky Bar (15 mins walk) all within easy reach. The hotel features a unique boutique design and offers an excellent daily buffet breakfast with authentic flavours of Saigon.

Icon Saigon Hotel | Signature Room (King, 35sqm)

DAY 2: MEKONG DELTA EXPERIENCE

(B, L)

Sunday

Enjoy breakfast at the hotel before embarking on a 2-hour drive to My Tho. Your first stop will be Vinh Trang Pagoda, one of the largest Buddhist temples in southern Vietnam, covering nearly 20,000 square meters. This temple houses around 60 Buddha statues made from various materials, some dating back to the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Take a walk through the temple to learn about the Buddhist practices of the Mekong people. Don't forget to take photos of the famous 20-meter-tall Maitreya Buddha statue and the impressive 32-meter-long reclining Shakyamuni Buddha statue.

Upon arriving at My Tho Pier, you will board a private wooden boat for a river cruise to Thoi Son Island. This island is home to 5,000 residents who earn their living through farming and fishing along the river. Enjoy local honey tea and homemade snacks during your visit, and then take a short walk to a nearby sticky rice wine distillery.

While back on the boat, you'll be served fresh fruits and coconut water as you cruise towards Ben Tre. Once there, hop on a sampan for a scenic row along the small canals lined with coconut trees. Afterward, you'll stroll through the village and take a short transfer by Xe Lam, a typical form of transportation in the Mekong Delta.

Next, visit a coconut candy workshop and then walk to a riverside restaurant to enjoy lunch, featuring the local specialty: deep-fried elephant ear fish.

Drive back to Saigon in the late afternoon. The rest of your day is at leisure.

Icon Saigon Hotel | Signature Room (King, 35sqm)

DAY 3: CU CHI TUNNELS HISTORY

(B, L, D)

Monday

7:00 Depart the hotel to Bach Dang pier, where you will embark on your private speedboat for a 1.5-hour cruise to Cu Chi tunnels, located 65km Northwest of Saigon. Enjoy the morning fresh air, see the sun rise, and observe the local life of Saigonese as you cruise along the riverside.



Upon arrival in Cu Chi, you will meet a Cu Chi veteran, Uncle Nam Chia, who joined the local guerrilla force at the age of 14 and spent a long time living underground. This meeting will provide a general overview of the war in Saigon and what life was like for locals living underground in the 1960s, followed by a Q&A session that will consolidate all the information and questions you may have about the Vietnam War.

Next, tour the tunnels in real life with a local guerrilla escort, explore a vast underground network of tunnels that hid and protected thousands of Viet Cong troops during the Vietnam War. The section lies beneath a dugout by Communist forces in the late 1940s, during the Fight for independence against the French. As you will discover, the tunnels span thousands of miles and once hid an underground city of sorts with living quarters, smokeless kitchens, hospitals, and schools.

The tunnels were typically 1m high and not even 0.8m wide, with air passages to the surface camouflaged to look like natural holes from tree roots or animals. The tunnels that you will traverse have been expanded for safety and convenience. Digging the tunnels was an incredibly arduous and time-consuming endeavor, as they were often dug by hand. Before abandoning them, the Viet Cong left booby traps for the invading troops. striding through underground small alleys, and visiting the smokeless Hoang Cam kitchen at the end.

Get back in your van and drive to a Ben Nay riverside restaurant for lunch before driving back to the hotel. Your afternoon is at leisure.

18:00 Hop on your vintage Vespa for a Saigon nightlife adventure with selected stops for tasting different types of local cuisines and beers.

[Icon Saigon Hotel | Signature Room \(King, 35sqm\)](#)

DAY 4: LAN HA BAY LUXURY PRIVATE CHARTER CRUISE - DAY 1 OF 3 (B, L, D)

Tuesday

5:00 Transfer to Tan Son Nhat International Airport (T3) for your flight to Hanoi. You will board **VN240 SGN/HAN 7:00/9:10** on Airbus A350 / Business class.

9:10 Arrive at Noi Bai domestic airport, meet your guide and driver, then take a 3-hour transfer to Tuan Chau pier. Upon arrival, take a 30-minute speedboat transfer to board your private charter luxury Nostagia for a 3-day-2-night cruise and adventure in Lan Ha Bay. Lunch will be served after the welcome and safety briefing. Get to know all the crew members who will accompany you throughout the 3D2N adventure. At the same time, Nostagia snakes her way past countless islets, their striking karsts (limestone formations) rising dramatically from the emerald waters.

In the afternoon, you will visit Ao Ech - a "little paradise" isolated from the hustle and bustle of



the outside world. Kayaking at Ao Ech in Lan Ha Bay offers a peaceful and awe-inspiring experience, as if you're exploring a secret world hidden within pristine nature. Embark and get ready for the happy hour on the sun-deck with a cooking demonstration performed by your cruise Chef. You will learn to make Banh Xeo "Sizzling pancake", Nem Ran "Springrolls", and enjoy during your happy hour pre-dinner drink.

19:00 Dinner will be served. Your cruise will anchor overnight at Tra Bau in Lan Ha Bay.

21:00

Enjoy the landscape of the bay at night up on the top deck. Relax whilst enjoying drinks from the bar. Try your hand at night squid fishing, or watch a movie in the restaurant. Overnight on board.

Note: Massage service is available on board. Please get in touch with the Cruise Manager for more information and assistance with booking.

Luxury Nostalgia Cruise | Private charter (10 cabins)

DAY 4: LAN HA BAY LUXURY PRIVATE CHARTER CRUISE - DAY 2 OF 3 (B,L,D)

Wednesday

6:00

The day starts early onboard Nostalgia Cruises with a Tai Chi session on the sundeck. The breakfast is served in the dining room with a morning view of the bay's landscape, and then we continue our journey.

6:45

Breakfast at the restaurant while the cruise continues its journey.

7:45

Visit Viet Hai Village, then take a bicycle ride along the village path through rainforests and a dark tunnel, with stunning views of rice fields along the way. Stop at the village to relax and visit an ancient local house made of straw, mud, and bamboo. This is a unique chance to see local life, interact with locals, and learn more about life in a valley.

13:30

Progress to Dark and Bright Caves - a must-visit destination! Kayaking through these caves is the ultimate way to experience the breathtaking beauty of Ha Long Bay up close.

16:00

Return to Nostalgia Cruises. You can either join another cooking class, swim in the untouched area, or enjoy the Happy Hour (*buy 1 get 1*) at the bar while watching the magnificent sunset over the Gulf of Tonkin.



19:00

Fusion dinner is served. Enjoy delicious local food, prepared and served by our wonderful onboard catering staff. This is a delightful meal in an intimate, romantic setting.

21:00

Enjoy the landscape of the bay at night up on the top deck. Relax whilst enjoying drinks from the bar. Try your hand at night squid fishing, or watch a movie in the restaurant. Overnight on board.

Note: Massage service is available on board. Please get in touch with the Cruise Manager for more information and assistance with booking.

Luxury Nostagia Cruise | Private charter (10 cabins)

DAY 6: CRUISE DISEMBARKATION - PRIVATE TRANSFER TO HANOI (B, L)

Thursday

Wake up to the peaceful sounds of the gentle breeze and water lapping against the boat in the early morning. Enjoy light refreshments, including tea, coffee, and pastries, in the dining room.

For an energetic start to the day, head to the sundeck for an optional tai chi session. Then visit Cat Ba Island, where you hop on a van to explore Trung Trang Cave.

Trung Trang Cave is located in Trung Trang Valley, 15km northwest of Cat Ba Town. The cave is 300m long through the mountain, with a mysterious beauty formed over millions of years by geological tectonics, along with many historical vestiges. The cave has many stalactites in various shapes that stimulate the imagination and amaze visitors during the walk-through.

Return to Nostagia and check out of your cabin at 09:30. Make the most of your last moments on board with a final, leisurely brunch and a tea ceremony before disembarking at 11:30 and transferring to your private vehicle.

After disembarking, you will take a 3-hour private transfer to Hanoi and check into your hotel.

In the evening, embark on a captivating walking tour of the old quarter to immerse yourself in the vibrant daily life of the locals. Next, journey to Hang Ma Street, where traditional and modern lanterns illuminate the path, beckoning you to join in the celebration of the mid-autumn festival in Hanoi. Embrace the spirit of negotiation as you select a lantern and showcase your bargaining skills like a true local. Then, return to the enchanting "Train Street," where you can unwind, savor icy-cold Hanoi beers paired with homemade snacks, and witness the magic of a train passing by—a moment that captures the essence of life in this dynamic city.

Silk Path Hanoi Hotel is in a perfect location in the Old Quarter of Hanoi, with Hoan Kiem Lake (10



mins walk), Lantern Street (5 mins walk) and Train Street (3 mins walk) are all within easy reach. The hotel has its charm and offers an excellent breakfast with the authentic flavour of Hanoi.

Silk Path Hanoi Hotel | Premium Executive Room (King, 40sqm)

DAY 7: EXCLUSIVE LIVING FULLY: MEDITATION, SPIRITUAL & REFLECTION (B, L, D)

Friday

7:00 Depart from your hotel, take a 1.5-hour transfer to Ha Nam province. Upon your arrival at Dia Tang Phi Lai pagoda, get a brief introduction and start your “Living Fully” program, instructed by local masters at the Dia Tang Phi Lai pagoda.

LIVING FULLY PROGRAM SCHEDULE

8:30 *The first lesson*

8:45 *Golden lessons – Chanting*

9:45 *Peace in every step & Miracle breath*

10:15 *The art of touching peace / Practicing meditation*

10:50 *Compassionate practicing*

11:30 *A grateful meal*

14:00 *Tea meditation*

15:30 *Mindful talking / Karma law Q&A*

16:30 *End of the program. Transfer back to Hanoi.*

19:00 Transfer to LukLak restaurant for farewell dinner.

22:00 Back to the hotel. The rest of the night is at leisure.

Silk Path Hanoi Hotel | Premium Executive Room (King, 40sqm)

DAY 8: DEPARTURE HANOI (B)

Saturday

Breakfast at the hotel. Free time at your leisure until transfer to Noi Bai International Airport (T2) for your onward flight back to your home country. End of services.

Price: US\$4,500/person

What's included:

- > 3 nights at the downtown ICON Saigon Hotel, premium room category as mentioned
- > 2 nights on a chartered private luxury cruise Nostalgia in Lan Ha Bay



- > 2 nights at the boutique luxury Silk Path Hanoi Hotel, premium room category as mentioned
- > One-way on-tour business class flight ticket Saigon/Hanoi, operated by Vietnam Airlines
- > All custom tours & handcrafted experiences by local travel experts as described in the itinerary
- > Private transfer on a comfortable air-conditioned limousine Van
- > Private dinners (2) with set menu at hand-picked restaurants & other meals (if any) as mentioned
- > Experienced, knowledgeable & professional English-speaking tour guide escort throughout
- > Basic gratuities for the tour guides and drivers
- > Local Authority permit and Government tax

What's not included:

- > Items that are not mentioned in What's included
- > Personal nature expenses: shopping, telephone, alcoholic drinks