



Grand Tour of Indochina
28 Days
Fully Inclusive from the UK

Enjoy the best of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia on our most comprehensive tour of Indochina, which samples the wide ranging culture, history and geography of this fascinating region. From Sapa's impressive rice terraces to the beautiful Buddhist temples in Luang Prabang, this tour has it all.

This tour includes some hiking over steep terrain whilst in Sapa.

Fully Inclusive price includes:

- International flights and current taxes
- Domestic transportation
- Accommodation
- All meals (excluding drinks)

Welcome to Wendy Wu Tours

Indochina continues to amaze, fascinate and thrill our passengers, many of whom have travelled to one country in Asia with us, then another, year after year. We urge you to keep in mind all the rewards, as well as challenges of travelling in a country with a history, culture and attitude so unlike your own.

A typical day's sightseeing may include the bustle and noise of a city street, sights and smells of a local market and interacting with the locals. Travelling in Indochina requires patience and potential delays are to be expected due to standards of service. There is a low level of English spoken throughout Indochina, so your local guides or National Escort will be indispensable during your trip.

Almost everything will be different to what you may be used to. We have found that our passengers who embark with a sense of humour and adventure, who accept that things do not always go to plan, are those who find their experience most rewarding. It is essential that all passengers recognise the demands of factors such as basic facilities and cultural differences they may encounter in some areas.

Book now on **0844 499 3899** visit **www.wendywutours.co.uk** or see your preferred travel agent.

Your Tour Dossier

This document is designed to be read in conjunction with the other pre-departure information provided by Wendy Wu Tours including the tour itinerary as described in our brochure and/or website. It aims to provide a straightforward description of the physical activities involved in sightseeing or travelling during the tour.

If there are any particular challenges, from the length of time spent on your feet, the length of drives and flights, to the standard of remote accommodation; they will be explained here.

All passengers must read this document to ensure the itinerary is suitable for their interests and physical capabilities. This is not your final itinerary and therefore does not mention all the sites visited.



Grand Tour of Indochina - Medium Paced Tour

These tours are not strenuous but do require higher levels of fitness. A typical tour may include longer periods of sightseeing on foot, climbing of stairs and getting on and off boats will be necessary. These tours may involve longer periods of driving; sometimes on poorly maintained roads, and overnight train journeys; as well as some easy hiking. Some Medium Paced Tours may involve several days at altitude. Anyone with a good level of fitness should be able to complete this itinerary. Of course our local guides always endeavour to provide the highest level of service and assistance, but they cannot be expected to cater for customers who are unfit to complete the itinerary. If you do have mobility difficulties, please contact us for our range of private tours which are more flexible and can better cater for individual needs.

It is essential that all passengers recognise the demands of factors such as basic facilities and cultural differences they are likely to encounter in some areas. The more difficult aspects of this itinerary include the trip to Sapa (Vietnam), with overnight train journeys there and back, and trekking in occasionally muddy, slippery or steep terrain each day. Similarly, sightseeing at any of the Angkor temple ruins (Cambodia) involves not just walking but climbing – up steps and over fallen rocks. This is quite adventurous travel and uses local modes of transport – for example, riding tuktuk (tractor motored taxis) over bumpy roads, and encounters poor road conditions in both the countryside and cities.

Please note that times and distances listed in the tour dossier are approximate.

Day 1-2: UK/Saigon

Fly overnight from the UK to Saigon. On day 2, you will be met at Saigon airport in the arrivals hall by your Local Guide and/or National Escort from Wendy Wu Tours. Together with all other group members who may be arriving at a similar time, you will transfer approx. 45mins to your hotel and check-in. There is no sightseeing today. A tour introduction will be held in the hotel later today or tomorrow morning. There will not be food or drinks served at this meeting; it is simply an opportunity for your group to meet and learn more about travelling in Indochina.

Day 3: Saigon

Sightseeing in downtown Saigon and the Cholon district involves approx. 4hrs on foot over the whole day. Watch your valuables whilst in market area. There are graphic pictures in the War Remnants Museum that some people might find confronting.

Day 4: Mekong Delta day trip

There is an early rise this morning to drive approx. 2hrs (80km) to the city of My Tho. Travel by motorised, wooden boat between the islands and then change to smaller, paddle boats in the canals. Sightseeing involves hopping on and off these boats, often on unsteady and slippery surfaces, sometimes without handrails or assistance, and approx. 1hr on foot across the islands. Approx. 2hrs later, return to the docks and transfer back to Saigon.

Day 5: Cu Chi Tunnels/Tay Ninh

Remember to take insect repellent today as mosquitoes are more common in the Cu Chi district. This is a full day of sightseeing so we leave the hotel this morning at about 7am. Transfer approx. 2hrs (75km) to Cu Chi. Sightseeing here involves approx. 2hrs on foot on uneven mud paths through the forest and, if you choose, crawling through some of the tunnels. It is important to follow your Guide's directions to leave on time so as to arrive at Tay Ninh in time to see the midday service. Transfer approx. 1hr (60km) to Tay Ninh to the 'Holy See' and watch the 30min Cao Dai service. Transfer approx. 10mins to have lunch - the meal is simple but this is the only suitable restaurant in the area. Transfer approx. 3hrs (100km) back to Saigon.

N.B: At the Cu Chi Tunnels you will be given the opportunity to shoot a range of guns (example AK47, M16). If you decide to do this, please be aware that the level of noise is extremely high and although ear muffs are available, they may not provide the level of protection required. It is recommended you bring ear plugs from home if you would like to participate.

Day 6: Saigon/Hoi An

Transfer to the airport for your morning flight to Danang (flight duration 1hr); the closest airport to Hoi An. Enjoy some sightseeing in Danang at the Cham Museum and China Beach. At Marble Mountains there are some uneven stone steps and it can get hot. If you are unable to complete this activity, or choose not to go with the group, you may have to remain with the driver/coach because the group could descend on the other side of Marble Mountain depending on the route taken. There are marble workshops at the bottom of the stairs. Watch your step inside as the caves are dark and damp – a small torch would be handy. Transfer approx. 45mins to your hotel in Hoi An and check-in.

Day 7-8: Hoi An

Sightseeing around the Old Town in Hoi An involving approx. 2hrs on foot. The rest of the day and the following day are at leisure.

Day 9: Hoi An/Hue

Drive north approx. 3.5hrs (135km), over the Hai Van (Cloudy) Pass to Hue. This is a winding, sometimes steep but scenic road along the coast. In Hue, sightseeing at the Citadel involves approx. 1.5hrs on foot through the palace complex. This area is mostly open, so bring along sun and/or rain protection. We spend approx. 1.5hrs at the Thien Mu Pagoda where there are some steep slopes and uneven steps without handrails.

Day 10: Hue/Hanoi

This morning is easy sightseeing around Hue, involving approx. 90mins on foot. There are steep and uneven steps without handrails at the Khai Dinh Tomb. If you are unable to complete this activity, or choose not to go with the group, you will be able to wait with the driver/coach, or explore as far as you are able then return to the parked coach on your

own. Transfer approx. 30mins to the airport for the flight to Hanoi (flight duration 1hr). From Hanoi airport, transfer approx. 1hr to the hotel and check-in.

Day 11: Hanoi /Sapa

Easy sightseeing around Hanoi involves approx. 2hrs on foot at the Ho Chi Minh 'quarter' and Temple of Literature. Please note that the Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum is closed from 11am each day and from Sep-Dec, so you may not be able to enter. However, if you do enter it, both men and women must dress respectfully with covered shoulders and knees. You must also be quiet, show respect and you will not be allowed to carry cameras, mobile phones, etc. (usually your Local Guide will offer to hold these for you). After lunch, the afternoon is at leisure. Late check-out from the hotel has been arranged for your group so you will be able to have some time to freshen up and pack before dinner. Transfer to the station to board your overnight train from Hanoi to Lao Cai station. This journey usually takes approx. 8hrs (340km) and is quite bumpy. Wear comfortable clothes to sleep in and take snacks as none are readily available on board.

NB: You will most probably need to carry your luggage over numerous train tracks to reach your platform and carriage because of the layout of Hanoi station. This trip involves 2 overnight train journeys which are in first class soft sleeper compartments where each cabin consists of four berths (sharing).

Day 12: Sapa

Arrive early (approx. 0530) at Lao Cai station and drive approx. 45mins (34km) on a winding, mountainous road to your hotel in Sapa.

NB: Check-in is at 2pm, so it is unlikely that your room will be available. Commence sightseeing and return to the hotel later.

Morning is at leisure to explore the local market and the town of Sapa. This afternoon and tomorrow, you will have the opportunity to visit some of the small villages around Sapa to see different ethnic hill tribes. Your guide and/or National Escort will adjust your itinerary and length of the hikes according to your group's fitness, interest and physical abilities. The sightseeing involves hiking in occasionally muddy, slippery and steep terrain and driving over rough, unsealed and winding roads.

Here is an example of a full hike available on this itinerary: *Cat Cat Village* – approx. 3hr (7km) hike to meet some of the H'mong hill tribe (this is one of the shortest hikes around Sapa). Return to Sapa by coach/jeep.

Day 13: Sapa/train to Hanoi

Refer to notes above for today's sightseeing. Later this afternoon, transfer back down to Lao Cai where you will have dinner before boarding your overnight train to Hanoi.

NB: Your Local Guide will confirm the menu for tomorrow's seafood lunch and dinner on board the junk boat tonight, so

please mention any dietary requests, food allergies or dislikes to them again before you start driving to Halong Bay.

Day 14: Halong Bay Junk Boat (overnight)

Due to the check-out time being midday, it is not possible to book hotel rooms this morning for your group to freshen up after the train ride. Instead, on arrival in Hanoi early (approx. 0630hrs) this morning, you will transfer to a local restaurant for breakfast and continue from there to Halong Bay. Drive approx. 3.5hrs (160km) to Halong City and port, including a 20min rest stop. As it is so popular, there are usually a crowd of boats at the docks – please be reassured that the cruise itself will be scenic and relaxing. Boarding your junk boat could involve climbing over and through other boats, moored between it and the dock – sometimes without handrails, ladders or assistance from staff. The junk boats have been recently built and modelled on the traditional 'junk' which was both home and working vessel for fishermen in the Orient for centuries. They usually hold about 20 dining (or 18 max overnight) passengers, have an enclosed dining area and open deck on the upper deck. We have lunch on board and cruise around the bay before anchoring for the night. Sightseeing includes visiting underground caves on the islands which require climbing up and down steps inside and outside of the caves.

Day 15: Halong Bay/Hanoi

Continue cruising and after an early lunch, return to the docks before midday and drive back to Hanoi through the striking Red River Delta.

Day 16: Hanoi/Luang Prabang

Transfer to the airport for a morning flight to Luang Prabang (flight duration 55mins). Transfer approx. 15mins to hotel and check-in. Sightseeing this afternoon is easy, involving short local walks of approx. 1hr on foot. Sightseeing at Phousy Hill involves approx. 1hr on foot – the hill is 100m high and this area is fairly steep (with steps) but the view is worth the climb. Transfer to the hotel for a 3 night stay.

Day 17: Pak Ou day trip

Bring a torch today for sightseeing in Tham Phoum cave if you wish. After breakfast at a local bakery, transfer to the docks and board a motor boat which takes approx. 2hrs to ride 25km upstream. Sightseeing at Pak Ou involves climbing steps from the base of the dock to the first cave and another approx. 45mins on foot over uneven surfaces that includes walking up the hill to the second cave where you will need your torch. After lunch across the river we return by boat to Luang Prabang via a local village. There is a leisurely walk here, approx. 40mins before continuing to Luang Prabang by boat.

Day 18: Kuangsi Waterfall day trip

Drive approx. 1hr (32km) to Kuangsi Waterfall. Sightseeing here will involve approx. 1hr of light walking. On the way up to the waterfall you follow a bush walking track which has a slight upward gradient. If time permits, you may also visit the nearby ethnic villages.

N.B: It is possible to swim in the river near the falls so please remember to bring a swimsuit and a towel. Changing rooms are available on site.

Day 19: Luang Prabang/Vang Vieng

Check out of hotel. Drive approx. 6hrs (240km) to Vang Vieng, easy sightseeing en route in Pathang Village involving approx. 1hr on foot. Take a slow approx. 30mins motor boat ride downstream.

Day 20: Vang Vieng/Vientiane

Sightseeing this morning at Tham Chang Cave involves approx. 1hr on foot over uneven surfaces, and climbing steps to get up to the cave. Drive approx. 3.5hrs (160km) to Vientiane. This afternoon involves approx. 45mins easy sightseeing around Vientiane.

Day 21: Vientiane

Easy sightseeing involving approx. 1-2hrs on foot.

Day 22: Vientiane/Phnom Penh

Transfer to the airport for your morning flight to Phnom Penh (flight duration, 90mins). On arrival, transfer approx. 20mins to the hotel and check-in. Leisurely sightseeing this afternoon involves approx. 3hrs on foot.

Day 23: Phnom Penh

This morning, visit the Apsara Association to see a performance (ask your Guide if you would like to make a donation). After lunch, drive approx. 30mins (15km) to the Killing Fields site and sightseeing here involves approx. 1hr on foot. NB: From January 2012, the Killing Fields will be replaced by a visit to Wat Phnom. If you would like to visit the Killing Fields, please ask your Tour Guide who can arrange this locally as an optional excursion (subject to timing). Drive approx. 30mins back into the town centre to Tuol Sleng Museum, where sightseeing involves approx. 1hr on foot. Both today's visits commemorate the atrocities that occurred during the regime of Pol Pot. Most people find them quite confronting and emotional so you will be given time to explore on your own if you choose. Afterwards, spend some time at the Russian Markets – watch your valuables while in and around the market areas.

Days 24-25: Phnom Penh/Siem Reap

Transfer to the airport for your morning flight to Siem Reap (flight duration 55mins). On arrival, transfer to hotel and check-in. After lunch, commence touring and spend the afternoon at the Angkor Temples complex. UNESCO manages the complex and to enter your group will drive 6km out of

town to the main entrance gate to get your entrance passes, which you must carry with you each time you visit. Sightseeing within the Angkor area over the next 3 days involves driving up to 2hrs on small roads (or tracks), and exploring each temple ruin involves approx. 1-2hrs on foot over uneven ground or climbing over rocks. It can get hot and humid here so you must carry sun protection and drinking water with you. If you choose to climb at any site, you must be able to climb and descend independently – most of the ancient stairs are steep and without handrails. The most walking involved is at Ta Keo.

N.B: The Central Tower of the Angkor Wat complex has a limited number of visitors allowed at any given time, under new regulations from UNESCO. If you wish to visit this tower you will be required to wait in the queue alongside all other visitors. The ability to do this will be determined upon the groups' schedule today.

Day 26: Siem Reap (Aug to Feb – High water season)

Drive to Tonle Sap, approx. 30mins on a rough, unsealed road to board motorised cruise boats for approx. 1-2hrs, cruise past the houseboats and open water of the lake. Spend the afternoon sightseeing within Angkor complex.

Day 26: Siem Reap (Mar to Jul - Low water season)

Spend the morning and afternoon sightseeing around Banteay Srei and within the Angkor complex, returning to town for lunch.

Day 27: Depart Siem Reap

Transfer from your hotel to Siem Reap Airport for your overnight flight to the UK.

Day 28: UK

Arrive home. Depending on your chosen airline, some flights to the UK will arrive on day 27, whereas others will arrive on day 28.

Land Only

If you are travelling on a land only basis, you will need to make your own way to the starting hotel in Saigon on Day 2 and end the tour on Day 27 in Siem Reap, continuing as per your own arrangements.

Please refer to the Wendy Wu Tours brochure and/or website for details on departure dates, prices, itineraries, inclusions and tour extensions available as well as full booking conditions.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Before You Leave

Itinerary Changes - The order of events and sightseeing may vary according to local conditions or for operational purposes. The schedules of the domestic airlines in Indochina are subject to frequent changes. For this reason, we have indicated approximate times only. Your Local Guide or National Escort will inform you of any schedule changes as they are informed of them. Roads in Indochina have generally been improved over recent years, but some road construction and/or weather conditions may still lengthen the driving times. Our intention is to adhere to the day to day itinerary as printed; however order of events and sightseeing may vary according to local conditions.

- The schedules of the domestic airlines in this region are subject to frequent changes. For this reason, we have indicated morning, afternoon or evening flights below. Your Local guide or National Escort will inform you of any schedule changes as they are informed of them.
- The Central Tower of the Angkor Wat complex has a limited number of visitors allowed at any given time, under new regulations from UNESCO since its recent restoration. If you wish to visit this tower you will be required to wait in the queue alongside all other visitors. The ability to do this will be determined upon the groups' program on the day of visiting.
- Traffic / Road Construction - roads in this region have generally been improved over recent years, but road and/or weather conditions may still lengthen driving times. Road construction work in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia usually encompasses an enormous section of road. The roads surrounding Phnom Penh, including those in outer suburbs, are in terrible condition, unsealed and eroded by daily rains.

Visas - A visa is required for entry into Cambodia and Vietnam and a standard visa processing service is included in your tour cost. We will require your passport, completed visa application form, and 1 passport photo, taken within the last 6 months, to process your visa. We will require all this information 8 weeks prior to departure. As per our standard visa processing service, we will have your passport for at least 4 weeks. In rare cases you may be required to provide further information or documentation to the Cambodian/Vietnamese Embassy and/or be required to attend an interview at the Embassy in London. If this is the case we will notify you as soon as possible.

Visas for Laos are not included as there is no Laos consulate in the UK. However, visas are very easy and inexpensive to obtain upon arrival in Laos.

Vaccinations and Your Health - We recommend that you contact either your local GP or a travel doctor for advice on vaccinations and travel health. www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk is a comprehensive website that you may also find useful.

Climate - Please refer to our website or brochure for detailed temperature charts.

Insurance - It is a condition of booking with us that you take out suitable travel insurance. You must provide us with the name of your insurers and their 24 hour emergency contact number when you book with us or as soon as possible thereafter. Wendy Wu Tours will not be liable for any costs incurred by you due to your failure to take out suitable travel insurance from the date of booking.

What to Expect on Tour

Development - Although Indochina is developing, it still lacks international standards of civil infrastructure and therefore tourist facilities. For example, you may see a hole in the road without a warning sign or safety barricade; concepts of personal responsibility are different to those in the UK. Consequently, tourist and public facilities may not uphold the same safety standards as in the UK. However, all of our suppliers meet local safety standards as a minimum. We want you to have an enjoyable holiday so we ask that you take extra care, use your common sense as well as refer to notices and follow advice from your National Escort/Local Guides.

Group Size - All our group tours are guaranteed to run subject to a minimum number of 8 travellers and a National Escort will accompany each group of over 10. The maximum group size varies depending on the tour, but is usually no more than 22 passengers.

Accommodation - Your accommodation is selected for convenience of location, comfort or character, and can range from a business hotel in one city to a family run guesthouse in a smaller town. In more remote areas, accommodation may be of a lower standard and may not have all western amenities. Hotels are generally rated as local three star standard, but please note that there is no international classification system for hotels and differences in facilities and quality do exist between the UK and Indochina. Rest assured that all hotels used by Wendy Wu Tours are regularly inspected by our staff and our partners to ensure that standards meet your needs.

Rail Journeys - This tour involves two overnight train journeys which are in first class soft sleeper compartments where each cabin consists of four berths (sharing).

Meals - All meals (excluding drinks) are included in our fully inclusive group tours from the groups' arrival until the day of departure. Our schedule of meals is designed so that you can experience the local dishes, their individual flavours as well as the different ways they are prepared and cooked throughout Indochina.

Tipping - As with most countries, tipping is a way of life in Indochina. For our passengers' convenience we ask for a compulsory amount to be paid at the beginning of our group tours to cover tipping for guides, drivers, restaurant staff etc.

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Approximate tipping amounts can be found in our brochure and/or website; however exact tipping amounts will be stated in your final documentation pack.

Optional Extras - Our tours are planned to be as fully inclusive as possible. However, from time-to-time your National Escort or Local Guide may suggest optional tours/sightseeing in addition to the standard sightseeing planned for that city. Such options are at an additional cost, with prices ranging from US\$20-US\$50 per person (payable in local currency). If you do not wish to take part in any optional extras, you will have the option of enjoying some free time at leisure or to return to the hotel.

After Your Booking

Once you have booked with Wendy Wu Tours, you will receive a confirmation invoice followed by deposit documentation, which includes a visa application form, help sheet, and an Indochina travel guide. Your final documentation pack will be sent to you approx. 2 weeks prior to departure, and will include a travel wallet, badge, lanyard, suggested packing list and a phrase book, along with your final itinerary and international etickets.

Last Updated July 2011