



Vietnam Panorama

18 Days

Fully Inclusive from the UK

Our best value tour to Vietnam travels overland for much of its route to allow full enjoyment of this delightful countryside. Along the way, visit the famous sites of this fascinating land as well as many of its hidden treasures including the hill station Dalat and an overnight stay in Can Tho in the Mekong Delta.

Fully Inclusive price includes:

- International flights and current taxes
- Domestic transportation
- Accommodation
- All meals (excluding drinks)
- Touring with Guides and entrance fees
- Visa fees for UK passport holders

Welcome to Wendy Wu Tours

Vietnam 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 Vietnam requires patience and potential delays are to be expected due to standards of service. There is a low level of English spoken throughout Vietnam, 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 recognize 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.



Vietnam Panorama - 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 are the lengthy driving distances, particularly those between Saigon to Dalat and Nha Trang to Qui Nhon. The Vietnam Panorama is designed to experience the changing landscapes, faces and cultures as you move northward through Vietnam. The longest driving journey will be approx. 8-9hrs (involving 6-7hrs driving, 1hr sightseeing and 1hr for lunch, day 11).

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

Day 1-2: UK - 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 to your rooms. There is no sightseeing today. At some point today, when the whole group has arrived, a tour introduction will be held in the hotel. 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 Vietnam.

Day 3: Saigon

Sightseeing in downtown Saigon and the Cholon district involves approx. 4hrs on foot over the whole day. Watch your valuables while in the market areas. There are some graphic images in the War Remnants Museum, which some people may find confronting.

Day 4: Saigon - My Tho - Can Tho

There will be an early rise this morning to drive approx. 2hrs (80km) to the city of My Tho. You will travel by motorised, wooden boats between the islands and perhaps smaller, paddle boats in the canals. Sightseeing involves hopping on and off the 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. After lunch, drive another 2hrs (104km) to Can Tho, crossing the wide Thien Giang River (the upper branch of Mekong) by vehicle ferry. Check-in at your hotel.

NB: You will be staying in Can Tho for a single night before returning to Saigon. You may like to take a small overnight bag, leaving your main luggage in safe storage at the Saigon hotel. Remember to take insect repellent and sun protection for your overnight trip to Can Tho, as it can get very hot and humid in the Mekong.

Day 5: Can Tho - Saigon

Continue sightseeing around the canals and in Can Tho before re-joining the coach. Drive approx. 4hrs (180km) back to Saigon and check-in at your hotel.

Day 6: Cu Chi Tunnels - Tay Ninh day trip

Remember to take insect repellent today as mosquitoes are more common in the Cu Chi district. Transfer approx. 2hrs (75km) to Cu Chi; actually an outer suburb of Ho Chi Minh City. Sightseeing here involves approx. 2hrs on foot on uneven mud paths through the bush and, if you choose, crawling through some of the tunnels. It is important to follow your Guide's directions to leave on time as to arrive at Tay Ninh to see the midday service. Transfer approx. 1hr (60km) to Tay Ninh to the 'Holy See' and watch most of the Cao Dai service. Then 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 7: Saigon - Dalat

Drive a total of approx. 6-7hrs (310km) up to Dalat today which sits at the foot of the Truong Son (Annamite) mountain range, so it is quite a winding and steep route. Upon arrival, check-in at your hotel before visiting the bustling central market. Please ensure you watch your valuables while in the market area. The afternoon is at your leisure.

Day 8: Dalat

Leisurely sightseeing around Dalat today, driving each way to Lat Village.

Day 9: Dalat - Nha Trang

Drive approx. 4-5hrs (210km), again on a winding road, descending to Phan Rang and then continuing on a level road north to Nha Trang. Upon arrival cruise through the islands off Nha Trang; here you will need to be able to board your group's boat without handrails, ladders or assistance from staff. This could involve climbing over and through other boats, moored between it and the dock. These 'cruise boats' are old fishing boats which have had benches and seats fitted for tourist groups. They are quite basic but have ample room

for the group to sit and relax while cruising. The deck has a roof providing shade. Afterwards check-in at your hotel for an overnight stay.

Day 10: Nha Trang - Qui Nhon

Drive approx. 6 -7hrs (240km) north to Qui Nhon. There will be time allowed for lunch, rest and photo stops. Check-in at your hotel. There is no sightseeing today in Qui Nhon.

Day 11: Qui Nhon - Hoi An via Son My

This morning, drive 170km to the town of Quang Ngai. A short distance from here we will visit Son My, where there is a memorial for My Lai village, where the most notorious massacre of the Vietnam/American conflict happened. The memorial and museum are simple, but very effecting. Most people find this quite confronting and emotional so you will be given time to explore on your own. In the afternoon, drive 90km to Hoi An. Check-in at the hotel. There is no sightseeing today in Hoi An. Total driving time today is approx. 7-8 hrs.

Day 12: Hoi An

Approx. 2hrs on foot around Hoi An Old Town, then your afternoon is at leisure.

Day 13: Hoi An

Day at your own leisure.

Day 14: Hoi An - Hue

Drive north for approx. 30mins for some sightseeing around Danang. Easy sightseeing at China Beach. At Marble Mountains there are some uneven stone steps up and it can get hot. If you are unable to complete this activity, or choose not to go with the group, you will need to remain with the driver/coach because the group will descend on the other side of Marble Mountain and re-board the coach there. Watch your step inside dark and damp caves. Afterwards, drive approx. 3hrs (110km) over the Hai Van (*Cloudy*) Pass north to Hue. This is a winding and sometimes steep, scenic road along the coast. In Hue, sightseeing at the Citadel involves approx. 1.5hrs on foot through the palace complex – it can get very hot here and often rains in the afternoon, so you may need sun and/or rain protection. There will be approx. 45mins walking at the Thien Mu Pagoda, where there are steep and uneven steps without handrails. Afterwards there is a short transfer to the hotel where you will check-in.

Day 15: Hue - Hanoi

This morning is easy sightseeing around Hue, involving approx. 3hrs on foot. There are steep and uneven steps without handrails at the Tu Duc Tomb and 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 an afternoon flight to Hanoi (flight duration 1hr). From Hanoi airport, transfer approx. 1hr to your hotel and check-in.

Day 16: Hanoi

Both men and women must dress respectfully for the Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum (closed Sep-Dec), with covered shoulders and knees. Sightseeing in central Hanoi involves approx. 4hrs on foot at the Ho Chi Minh quarter, Temple of Literature and the Old Quarter. When visiting the Mausoleum you must be quiet, show respect and will not be allowed to carry cameras, mobile phones, etc. (usually your Local Guide will offer to hold these for you).

NB: Your Local Guide will confirm the menu for tomorrow's seafood lunch on board the junk boat tonight, so please mention any food allergies or dislikes to them again before the end of today.

Day 17: Halong Bay day trip

For the last few years, the Hanoi Government has restricted traffic within central Hanoi, to reduce traffic and protect the Old Quarter. Larger coaches are not allowed to drive through the area after 8am. We have an early rise this morning to drive approx. 3.5hrs (170km) 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 maximum for overnight) passengers, have an enclosed dining area and open deck on the upper deck. We take a 4hr cruise including lunch on-board, return to the dock and drive back to Hanoi.

Day 18: Hanoi – UK

Transfer from your hotel to Hanoi Airport for your flight to the UK. Depending on your chosen airline, some flights to the UK will arrive the same day, whereas others will arrive the following day.

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 Day 2 and end the tour on Day 18 in Hanoi, 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 Vietnam 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 Vietnam 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:

- Vietnam Airlines' domestic flights are subject to frequent changes. For this reason we have indicated morning, afternoon or evening flights only. Your Local guide or National Escort will inform you of any schedule changes as they are informed of them.
- Traffic / Road Construction - roads in this region have generally been improved over recent years, but road or weather conditions may still lengthen driving times. Road construction work in Vietnam usually encompasses an enormous section of road and for this reason; the timings listed in this dossier are approximate.

Visas - A visa is required for entry into Vietnam. 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 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.

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 Vietnam is developing quickly, 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 Vietnam. 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.

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 Vietnam.

Tipping - As with most countries, tipping is a way of life in Vietnam. 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. Approximate tipping amounts can be found in our brochure and/or website; however exact tipping amounts will be stated in your final documentation pack.

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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.

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