



25 Days

Vietnam

Halong to Ho Chi Minh Expedition

Join us on this very special expedition amongst the hidden backwaters and breath-taking beauty of rural Vietnam. With remote trails, traditional tribes, the stunning beauty of Halong Bay and the culture of Ho Chi Minh and the Mekong Delta, this expedition traverses the length and breadth of Vietnam. Students will gain an unparalleled insiders perspective of the country through our exceptional local contacts and expert guides. In conjunction with our pre-trip training, this Vietnam programme offers an excellent introduction to adventure, expeditioning and expanded global horizons.



Recommended expedition itinerary

Day
1-3

Arrive in Hanoi & explore

Upon our arrival in Hanoi, we meet our Trip Leader at the airport and then transfer to our hotel to freshen up. On day 3, after breakfast our guide will take you to meet our chef and go shopping at the local market to buy all the ingredients you will need for your Vietnamese cooking class, remember to pay attention because the end result will be your lunch! In the afternoon, we walk around the old quarter and soak up the sights and sounds of old Hanoi. We visit Hoan Kiem Lake to catch a glimpse of the endangered soft backed turtle and discover the legend of the "Lake Of The Returned Sword".

Day
4

Pu Luong & first trek

This morning we leave Hanoi and drive to Mai Chau. We arrive at Poom Coong village for lunch and our first taste of the idyllic Vietnamese landscapes that will be present throughout our adventure. Driving a little further to the start of our first trek, we continue on foot through the beautiful hills, terraces and villages of the Pu Luong nature reserve. Tonight is spent at our first 'homestay'.

Day
5-7

The Hidden trails of Pu Luong

After breakfast with our Homestay hosts, we will spend the day trekking through more gems of Pu Luong. We stop for lunch amongst the lush, verdant hills before continuing our trek, reaching Hieu village and our next Homestay in the afternoon. The afternoon is free for you to rest and take a stroll around the village and visit the beautiful waterfall nearby. Over the next few days we continue our trek, passing the small villages of Hieu, Nua and Son. Each day we will pass cool streams perfect for a refreshing dip, luminous green paddy fields and friendly locals. At night, we stay in welcoming village homestays

Day
8-11

Project Work In Son Village

On reaching Son Village, we will spend the next three days engaged in a project to help the local community. Currently this would be building a pipe for the water supply to come directly into their village. Participants would be expected to help towards fundraising for this prior to their departure. Working alongside the locals gives us a great opportunity to support local communities, whilst gaining an insiders view of life in these small villages.

Day
12

Hike to Ton village & return to Hanoi

Today we be saying goodbye to Son village and, walking a gentle route through rice paddies and lush jungle, where we arrive at Ton village. Our driver will be waiting for us there to transfer us to Muong Khen town for lunch. We transfer back to Hanoi in the late afternoon before heading out to the bustling streets of this amazing city for dinner.

Day
13-15

Halong Bay Adventure

We drive to the picturesque Halong Harbour for the start of a three day cruise. We have lunch on board whilst cruising to the bay. This stunningly beautiful UNESCO World Heritage site is our home for the next few days, and we spend our time kayaking, swimming, visiting floating markets and witnessing incredible sunsets. On day 15, we return to the harbour and then to Hanoi, having dinner before transferring to the train station for our night train south to Danang. Our accommodation tonight is the famous Reunification Express and a four-berth soft sleeper cabin.





Day
16

Danang to Hoi An

Stepping off the train in Danang we visit Cham Sculpture Museum, home the worlds largest collection of Cham artefacts. We also visit the beautiful Marble mountains on our way to the ancient port town of Hoi An. We spend the afternoon strolling around the town exploring the delights of the Japanese covered bridge and the beautifully preserved Tan Ky House. We meet for dinner at a local restaurant in the ancient town.

Day
17

Hoi An to Huong Tra Que village

After breakfast we'll head down to the pier and take a boat along the Thu Bon River. We can visit the Bay Mau coconut forest, an area of both ecological and historical interest. The boat then continues down the river to Tra Que Vegetable Village where we spend the afternoon experiencing life as a Vietnamese farmer. On arrival, you will be welcomed with a local tea, before turning your hand to learning some local farming methods, preparing your lunch using ingredients that have been grown locally. After lunch, we get to cycle through the lush countryside back to Hoi An for the evening.

Day
18-20

Beach Days

After two weeks of intensive travel, we have two days rest and relaxation on the golden sands of Hoi An beach, before transferring back to Danang airport and flying to Saigon (Ho Chi Minh City).

Day
21-23

Explore the Mekong Delta

Today we leave Saigon and head to My Tho village for our first boat trip along the bustling waterways of the Mekong Delta. We stop at one of the many islands to visit a traditional Mekong Delta house & kitchen for some seasonal fruit along with some local tea and fresh honey. We also visit a local rice wine distillery and try our hand at paddling a traditional 'sampan' along the smaller waterways. Next we take to bikes and, using a number of the small local ferries, wind our way onto to Cai Be where we board another boat that takes us along the mighty Mekong River to a fantastic floating market. At Binh Hoa Phuoc and An Binh Island there are stunning sunset views over the Mekong. Next, it's back on the bikes and ferry system which takes us to Vinh Long, before covering some distance, by bike, to Can Tho. The route can be tailored to the group's cycling ability and interests but along the way are possible visits to brick kilns where terracotta and pottery are made, or a ride along the immense rice fields, or a cycle through numerous rural riverside villages. After lunch at a local street-side stall, we are taken by bus to Can Tho city, which we explore by foot, time allowing. Amongst all this, we visit colourful Cai Rang, the biggest floating market in the Mekong Delta, as well as enjoy a relaxing cruise down one of the many canals that branch off the main river. Finally, it's back on the bikes again for our last two-wheeled glimpse of the magical Mekong before we head back to Saigon by bus.

Day
24

Saigon to Cu Chi tunnels

After a relaxing morning and lunch at the hotel, we head out in the afternoon to the Cu Chi tunnels, one of the Viet Cong's main bases in the Vietnam war. See what life was like for the guerrilla warriors who lived and fought underground during the war. Those not scared of small spaces can crawl through 50 m of the some 200 km of tunnel systems below ground. There will also be chance to visit a rice paper workshop before retuning to Saigon for a final farewell dinner.

Day
25

Fly back to the UK

Depending on flight time, there may be some time to have a final look around Saigon before transferring to the airport for your flight back home.

Further information

Look what's included!

- International flights
- All accommodation
- All food
- All transportation and activities
- Bi-lingual, first-aid qualified local expedition leader
- Parent and student expedition launch evening
- Comprehensive pre-expedition training programme
- 1-day offsite safety INSET day for staff
- ATOL financial protection
- Medical Emergency / Repatriation Travel Insurance
- Group first aid kit and prescription meds pack
- BS8848 safety management and risk assessments
- Detailed pre-departure information and kit lists
- Comprehensive teacher travel packs
- Permanent operations team in your destination
- 24-hour UK operational support whilst overseas
- Carbon offsetting of all flights
- Free t-shirt for every participant and teacher

What's excluded?

- Transport to airport in UK
- Drinks (advice will be given on purification of water)
- Visas or tourist cards if required
- Any required inoculations
- Personal spending money
- Tips for guides, drivers and porters
- Airport departure taxes paid locally
- Cancellation and personal effects insurance

Your expedition timeline



Physical expedition rating:



Moderate physical activities are included in Grade 3 trips. Good health and reasonable fitness are important to get the most out of the trip. Trips of this grading are likely to include some walking at moderate altitude (up to 2,500m) and occasional longer/harder days may be involved, with between five and seven hours of walking on certain days. The trip may contain other activities such as cycling or rafting which also require physical effort and a reasonable level of fitness. Some steady preparation and an increase if your underlying fitness levels would help you get the most from this grade trip.

Culture shock rating:



Students should expect some culture shock. You'll be exposed to signs of poverty. The food will be quite different to home and English, whilst still spoken, will be less prevalent. Respecting the local culture will make it easier to fit in and get the most out of your trip. We're likely to visit remoter locations on this tour where access to western style services may be sporadic. Often on trips of this grading there are parts of the itinerary which are more remote, interspersed with sections which are more 'comfortable'.



A journey of 1,000 miles...

Starts with a single step... Contact us now to start your expedition journey

1 Get your tailor-made proposal and further information

If this itinerary doesn't quite scratch your expedition itch then let us tailor-make one for you. Our wealth of experience and expert in-country contacts means we can design an itinerary just for you. Contact us for more information and a detailed quote.

2 Ask for risk assessments and marketing materials

We can provide initial risk assessments and destination threat assessments to help you with your expedition approval process. Ask for posters and your pre-booking information pack too.

3 Arrange an expedition launch evening at your school

This is a chance for students and parents to hear more about the expedition with a comprehensive information evening with opportunity for questions.



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