

# Vietnam and Cambodia

## Finesse Travel's Exclusive Tour giving you a Dream Holiday

Two countries of contrasts where pleasant surprises await at almost every turn”

A country of beautiful diversity, Vietnam entices travellers with soaring mountains, thousands of kilometres of unspoilt beaches and one of the best street food scenes anywhere in the world.

Anchored by Hanoi in the north with its 1,000 years of history, and the modern, French-influenced metropolis of Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon) in the south,

In between these hotspots are rural towns and idyllic landscapes where buffalo and farmers in conical hats work the fields of the Mekong Delta, junks drift through the morning mist on Halong Bay and cyclo drivers peddle along the narrow streets of Hoi An's Ancient Town.

A pleasing mix of contrasts, Vietnam beguiles with the warmth, openness and positivity of its people, an abiding memory of an alluring country

### Cambodia

Stand in awe of the architectural achievement of Angkor Wat and contemplate the horrors of the Killing Fields at Phnom Penh. Soak up the colours, culture, and history of this incredible region. Its natural beauty coupled with tumultuous history make Cambodia a truly fascinating destination.

### Tour Highlights

- Fascinating city tours of Hanoi, Hoi An, Saigon, Phnom Penh and Siem Reap
- Meander through the towering limestone karsts of Ha Long Bay with an overnight cruise
- Visit the traditional Japanese merchant houses and the Pagoda Bridge in Hoi An
- Navigate the vast underground network of the Cu Chi tunnels used by the Viet Cong
- Cruise along the waterways of the Mekong Delta, witnessing the Cai Rang floating market
- Visit the harrowing S21 Genocide Museum and the notorious Killing Fields of Cambodia
- Visit the incredible temple complexes of Angkor Wat and Angkor Thom
- Take a ride on the Bamboo Train and visit the Bat Cave
- Explore local markets and sample the street food these countries are famous for

All Excursion and Entrances Included (except the 3 optionals mentioned)

Minimum 4\* Hotels Throughout

Local Guides Throughout

Some Meals are included (see daily schedule)

### WEATHER SUMMARY

Vietnam has a tropical climate with two distinct seasons: wet and dry.

Wet season is generally from April to October and dry season from November to March. It is good to note that Vietnam's climate varies depending on the time of year and geographic location.

Overall, when the weather isn't ideal in one area, it may be great in another.

# ITINERARY OVERVIEW

Max Group Size: 12

Dates	Destinations	Accommodation
Day 1 – Day 2	Depart the UK	
Day 2 – Day 3	Hanoi	La Siesta Ma May, Old Quarter
Day 3 – Day 4	Hanoi	La Siesta Ma May, Old Quarter
Day 4 – Day 5	Halong Bay Cruise	Amanda Luxury Cruise
Day 5 – Day 6	Flight Hanoi to Danang	Hoi-An Historic Hotel
Day 6 – Day 7	Hoi An	Hoi-An Historic Hotel
Day 7 – Day 8	Flight to Saigon	Liberty Central Riverside
Day 8 – Day 9	Saigon	Liberty Central Riverside
Day 9 – Day 10	Flight to Phnom Penh	Baitong Hotel
Day 10 – Day 11	Phnom Penh	Baitong Hotel
Day 11 – Day 12	Transfer to Battambang	Oh Battambang Boutique Hotel
Day 12 – Day 13	Battambang	Oh Battambang Boutique Hotel
Day 13 – Day 14	Boat to Siem Reap	Memoire D'Angkor
Day 14 – Day 15	Siem Reap	Memoire D'Angkor
Day 15 – Day 16	Siem Reap	Memoire D'Angkor
Day 16 – Day 17	Flight to the UK	
Day 17	Arrive in the UK	

# DETAILED ITINERARY



**Day 1: Depart the UK (Tuesday 23 September 2025)**

**Day 2: Hanoi (B & B at La Siesta Ma May Hotel, Old Quarter)**

Upon arrival at Hanoi airport, after clearing all customs procedures. You will be met your guide and transfer you to hotel. Free time to relax or explore some of Hanoi Old Quarter.



### Day 3: Hanoi (B & B at La Siesta Ma May Hotel, Old Quarter)

This morning we have included a tour of the city of Hanoi, with its ochre-colored colonial buildings, tree-lined boulevards and scenic lakes. Stop at the old coffee shop in the Old Quarter to get sharing from your tour guide about daily life of Hanoian. Then visit the historic **Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum (outside visit)**, an imposing monument of marble and granite built to house the preserved body of beloved revolutionary leader Ho Chi Minh, affectionately known to the Vietnamese as “Uncle Ho”. Tour the **One Pillar Pagoda**, a Buddhist temple built in 1049 of wood in the shape of a lotus blossom and set on a single stone pillar, considered by many to be one of Vietnam’s most iconic pagodas. Visit **Ho Chi Minh's House** nearby, a simple wooden house in a tranquil setting where Ho Chi Minh lived and worked. Some of his belongings are on display and visitors can walk up the steps to see his bedroom. Continue on to the **Temple of Literature**, Vietnam’s first national university built in the late 11<sup>th</sup> century. The picturesque temple is an example of well-preserved traditional Vietnamese architecture and is featured on the back of the 100,000 Vietnamese dong banknote.

Afternoon... at leisure

#### **Late afternoon....optional Water Puppet Show**

Water puppet show is a uniquely northern Vietnamese art form said to have originated in the flooded rice fields of the Red River Delta where villagers entertained themselves by manipulating puppets over the water. Modern performers stand chest-deep in water behind a screen and use long rods to move the colorful wooden puppets in a life-like way to depict scenes based on Vietnamese folklore. The skits are set to traditional music using drums, wooden bells, horns, bamboo flutes and cymbals. Scenes may also be accompanied by operatic songs narrating the action.

### Day 4: Hanoi – HaLong Bay (Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner)

After breakfast, we get picked up and make the 2.5 hour journey to HaLong Bay where we check-in on our overnight cruise. Explore HaLong Bay on 5 Star Amanda Luxury Cruise days is absolutely recommended for visitors who love travelling off the beaten track to discover an authentic local culture and hidden beauty spots on the HaLong Bay and Lan Ha Bay.

12:00 | Transferred to the main boat by tender. While enjoying a welcome drink, our cruise manager will deliver a cruise briefing and safety introduction.

Fabulous lunch is served while we start to sail into magnificent Ha Long Bay – an extension of HaLong Wonder which is much quieter and has fewer tourists.

Explore the hidden gems of HaLong Bay and Lan Ha Bay aboard the 5 Star Amanda Luxury Cruise. Enjoy a warm welcome, fabulous lunch, and a leisurely sail past iconic landmarks. Experience Tra Bau floating village or opt for kayaking at Ba Trai Dao Island. Unwind with a Sunset Party, Happy Hour, and Cooking Class. Indulge in a deluxe dinner before special evening activities.

## Day 5: HaLong Bay – Hanoi – DaNang – Hoi An (Early Breakfast and Brunch Hoi An Historic Hotel on B & B Basis)

Day two features Tai Chi, a visit to Dark and Bright Cave, and brunch before returning to Tuan Chau Harbor.

We transfer to Hanoi airport for our late afternoon flight to Danang Airport. On arrival, we will be met by our guide for the transfer to our hotel in Hoi-An.

We have included an early evening walking tour of the historical centre of Hoi-An.

Between the 15th and 19th centuries, Hoi An known then as 'Faifo', was a prosperous trading port, attracting Chinese, Japanese, Dutch, Portuguese and Spanish ships amongst others. Today, this World Heritage ancient town is recognized for its well-preserved architecture, pedestrian-only streets and distinctive local cuisine, allowing visitors a glimpse of its illustrious past. Hoi An's narrow lanes are ideal for a guided walking tour of its many atmospheric sights including: the old merchant houses with influences from Chinese, Japanese and Vietnamese architecture; the 400-year-old Japanese Covered Bridge, first built in the 1590s by the Japanese community to link them with the Chinese quarters across the stream; the Assembly Hall of the Chaozhou Chinese Congregation with its intricate woodcarvings; and the colorful market with stalls brimming with local specialties including silk, which can be turned into fashionable garments within a day or two.

## Day 6: Hoi-An (Hoi-An Historic Hote B & B Basis)

### Optional tour: Buffalo cart and fishing life tour

The flat, quiet roads around Hoi An's countryside are ideal for exploring by **traditional buffalo cart**. In Vietnam, farmers and buffalo working the fields have become a symbol of countryside life, with the buffalo being the most valuable possession of poor farmers, and therefore treated almost as a member of the family. Enjoy a scenic **buffalo cart ride** passing by rice paddies, shrimp ponds, and vegetable farms with excellent photo opportunities. At the dock, **board a local river boat** and start cruising down the Hoi An River. The boat will stop along the shore where you can try your hand at **casting traditional fishing nets**, a common fishing method still practiced today. Also learn the art of paddling the unique Vietnamese **round basket boats**. Return to your river boat and **enjoy light seafood dishes and a refreshing drink**.

## Day 7: Hoi-An – Saigon (Liberty Central Riverside Hotel, B & B Basis)

After breakfast transfer to Danang airport for departure flight to Ho Chi Minh city (Saigon)

This afternoon we have included a 3 Hour City Tour of Saigon

With over eight million inhabitants and four million motorbikes, Saigon is truly a city that never sleeps. Despite its modernity, Saigon maintains a strong link to the past and our city tour takes in some of Saigon's most historic landmarks including the **Notre Dame Cathedral**, a red brick edifice with twin spires constructed from materials imported from France (entrance is only permitted when no services are being performed). Then head across the square to the **Central Post Office**, completed in 1891. A short drive away is the former **Presidential Palace**, the headquarters of the Saigon Government during the American War. Continue to the **War Remnants Museum** for a vivid perspective of the American War through the eyes of the Vietnamese. (Please note that some of the displays are very graphic.) Experience Saigon's famed street coffee culture while your guide provides a brief language lesson as well as insights into daily life of a Saigonese before returning to your hotel.

### Optional Tour in the evening: Saigon after dark by Vespa

Immerse yourself into the cosmopolitan nightlife of this busy city by night. Soak up the energy of this urban metropolis at a top-ranking stylish rooftop venue of Saigon in central city location where we sip on our first



drinks and try out some tasty snacks while watching the sunset Saigon from the above. Your expert driver will then zoom through the busy streets of Saigon as you check out some of the famous highlights in this bustling city. Feel like a local as we feast on authentic, fresh seafood dishes, eating streetside and then enjoy the local favorite that is the delicious Banh Xeo, a traditional Vietnamese savory pancake. We then ride off into the night again to experience live music at two very different venues. Firstly, the laid-back atmosphere of quieter, softly lit coffee shop with live music before heading to another live music venue where a new generation of Vietnamese flaunt their style. Bring a healthy appetite and a sense of adventure as our guides show you their city by night.

Remark about traffic in Saigon:

If you have never visited Saigon - the city on the move, then it is a good idea to discover this city by motorcycles. Get well prepared that the traffic moves in a different way that at home. The roads are always busy with motorbikes, cars and buses. But take it easy, Saigonese knows how to handle all the turns. You will sit behind experienced drivers who understand their vespa and the traffic like the back of their hands. Only by sitting on a motorcycle that you can zig zag through the narrow alleys, bustling residential area to capture the real night life of Saigonese.



**Day 8: Mekong Delta (Included) – Saigon (Liberty Central Riverside Hotel, B & B Basis)  
Lunch included on the excursion**

Depart Saigon for a 1.5hr drive to Ben Tre Province in the Mekong Delta, famous for its tropical fruit gardens and traditional products made of coconuts. Visit a brick factory to learn how bricks are made by hand using centuries-old traditional methods before boarding your private local boat and cruising along the waterways to observe the way of life on the river. Shore excursions include a coconut workshop where almost every part of the coconut is used for candies and crafts, and a family-run mat workshop where you can try your hand at weaving the ubiquitous straw sleeping mats. A 3km (2mi) ride by tuk-tuk or bicycle takes you to the home of a fruit farmer where you can sample tropical fruits. After lunch at a local restaurant, board a rowing sampan for close up views of the water palm-lined waterways of the Delta. Travel back to the Hung Vuong pier by boat. Return to the hotel, rest of the day at leisure.



**Day 9: Visit Cu Chi tunnels (Included) – Phnom Penh, Cambodia (Baitong Hotel B & B Basis)**

From Saigon, take a 2hr drive northwest to the famous **Cu Chi Tunnels**, an immense network of connecting underground tunnels started in 1948 to protect the Viet Cong guerrillas from the French air and ground sweeps. The tunnels also served as living quarters, communication and supply routes, and housed hospitals, food and weapons caches. Touring **the underground compounds** will provide a better understanding of the history of the tunnels, the hardship of life in the tunnels and the Vietnamese resilience during combat. Return to Saigon.

Transfer to Saigon airport for our flight to Phnom Penh, Cambodia or the UK (for those not continuing to Cambodia)



Upon arrival, meet with your guide and transfer to your hotel

**Day 10: Phnom Penh Killing Fields, Genocide Museum and City Tour (Included) (Baitong Hotel B & B Basis)**

This morning we visit the Killing Fields and the S21 Genocide Museum. Located on the banks of the Tonle Sap and Mekong River, Phnom Penh was once known as the “Pearl of Asia”, one of the loveliest French-built cities in Indochina. After the Khmer Rouge regime, the city was sadly left a shadow of its former self. Now, due to a strong, young dynamism, the city is once again a vibrant, growing capital. Spend a half day learning more about the turbulent Khmer Rouge years with visits to **Tuol Sleng**, a high school turned interrogation prison known as **S-21** during the Khmer Rouge era and now a **genocide museum**; and **Cheung Ek**, a large memorial commemorating the 17,000 victims who died there under the reign of Khmer Rouge leader, Pol Pot, made famous by the movie “The Killing Fields”. While sombre reminders

of the cruelty of the Khmer Rouge regime, these visits will also provide an appreciation of the struggle that Cambodian people have faced and their tremendous courage to move on and rebuild their nation.

#### NOTES:

- A respectful and humble demeanor is requested when visiting the Toul Sleng Genocide Museum and the Killing Fields.

#### **This afternoon we have included a 3 hour city tour.**

Home to about 1.5 million people, Phnom Penh has been Cambodia's capital since French colonization of the country. Located on the banks of the Tonle Sap and Mekong River, Phnom Penh was once known as the "Pearl of Asia", one of the loveliest French-built cities in Indochina. Spend a half day exploring some key attractions in this charming city which boasts a rich blend of Khmer and colonial architecture. Explore the hillside **Wat Phnom** with its big trees and mischievous monkeys and hear about the legend of Lady Penh, the founder of the city; the **Royal Palace and Silver Pagoda**, two of the most striking buildings in the capital and considered as some of the finest examples of Khmer architecture. At the Silver Pagoda, notice the small green crystal Buddha (the "Emerald Buddha") and a life-sized solid-gold Buddha, which weighs 90kg (198lb) and is adorned with 2086 diamonds; and the **National Museum**, designed in Khmer style by a French archaeologist and painter in 1917. The museum's collection includes over 14,000 items, making it one of the world's largest collections of Khmer art, including sculptural, ceramics, bronzes, and ethnographic objects.

#### **Day 11: Phnom Penh to Battambang (Oh Battambang Hotel, B & B Basis)**

After breakfast, we transfer by road to Battambang. (Approx. 5 hours with a lunch stop en route)

Discover the charm of Battambang, Cambodia's second-largest city, nestled in the heart of the country's northwest. Battambang offers a captivating blend of rich history, vibrant culture, and stunning natural beauty. Wander through the well-preserved colonial architecture, explore the bustling markets brimming with local flavors, and delve into the region's artistic scene with visits to traditional Khmer performances and contemporary art galleries. Don't miss a leisurely boat ride along the Sangker River, dotted with picturesque floating villages and lush countryside. With its laid-back atmosphere and authentic Cambodian experience, Battambang is a hidden gem waiting to be explored.

Rest of the day free

#### **Day 12: Battambang Full Day Excursion in rural Cambodia (Oh Battambang Hotel, B & B Basis)**

We have included a full day excursion on a tuk tuk with a local driver/guide to Learn about the culture and history of Battambang on this guided tour. Ride a tuk tuk as you explore the city, experience traveling on a bamboo train, and visit the Killing Cave and the Bat Cave.

#### **Day 13: Battambang – Siem Reap (Memoire D'Angkor Hotel, B & B Basis)**

Pick-up at the hotel for journey to the river for the ferry boat to Siem Reap. Travel along the Sangker River then onto Tonle Sap Lake and see some of the floating villages. A lunch stop (lunch not included) will be made but food choices are limited so advisable to take provisions.

Transfer to Hotel Memoire D'Angkor. Approx. arrival time 15h00



#### Day 14: Well off the beaten track (Memoire D'Angkor Hotel, Lunch, B & B Basis)

Wake up early and transfer by private vehicle to the **West Gate of Angkor Wat** from where the sunrise can be best observed. Enter the temple complex. Angkor Wat (early 12th century) is surrounded by 190-metre-wide moat 1.5 kilometers by 1.3 kilometers and is claimed to be the largest religious building in the world. It is certainly one of the wonders of the ancient world. You will be amazed by the sheer size of the temple, which took 30 years to construct & used the labors of up to 300,000 workers. **Angkor Wat** was built as the earthly representation of the universe with its' central tower symbolizing Mt Meru which, Hindus believe, is at the center of the Universe. Return to the **West Gate** and breakfast can be enjoyed just outside of the Angkor complex at a local restaurant (own cost).

Drive to visit **Banteay Kdei** built between the 12th and 13th centuries. The ruined condition of the temple in no way detracts from the grandeur of this walled temple. Banteay means fortified monastery and refers to the double wall surrounding it.

Continue to **Ta Prohm**, this beautiful temple, built in 1186 as a Buddhist temple dedicated to the mother of Jayavarman VII, is one of Angkor's jewels and is overgrown with fig trees, giving a haunting yet exotic atmosphere. The magnificent roots of the trees have merged over the centuries with the temple's huge stone blocks, creating a 'forgotten city' feeling. Pause at **Ta Keo**, which would have been the finest temples in Angkor had it been completed. A short distance further are the twin temples of **Chau Say Tevoda** and **Thommanon**. Return to town for a rest and relaxation at the hotel in the midafternoon. Drive to **Angkor Thom**, not a temple, but an entire walled city of 9 sq km and served as the ancient royal **Capital of the Khmer Empire** from approx. 1181. With a probable population of 1 million, it was far bigger and grander than any city in Europe at the time. Your guide will take you to the **Terrace of the Elephants** and the **Terrace of the Leper King**. The center piece of Jayavarman VII's Capital is the Bayon temple and, as you approach, you will notice the 216 giants, enigmatic, smiling faces looking into every direction. Return to the South gate where you will board a small, private boat out to **Prasat Chrung Temple** to watch the amazing sunset.

#### Day 15: Siem Reap (Memoire D'Angkor Hotel, B & B Basis)

Take time to relax, shop and discover the street life in Cambodia's most pleasant tourist town by your own.

#### Optional: Farewell dinner with Apsara dance performance

**7:00pm** depart from your hotel for dinner.

Traditional Apsara dancing has a long history in Cambodia, dating back to the 7th century according to some stone temple carvings. In Hindu mythology, Apsaras were beautiful female creatures who descended from heaven to entertain gods and kings with their dancing. This traditional dance is meaningful in many ways as it constitutes a link between the different religions prominent in Cambodia, including Animism, Hinduism, and Buddhism. Also notice symbolic and elegant **finger gestures** and the **ornate silk costumes** inspired by the wall carvings of the Angkor temples. Tonight, spend an evening at **Angkor Village Apsara Theatre**, the **only air-conditioned theatre in town**, as dancers, singers and musicians bring ancient Khmer culture to life while you enjoy the best of Cambodian cuisine.

- **Performance daily from 19:30 on every Wednesday and Saturdays.**



## Day 16: Siem Reap departure

Meet with your guide and transfer from your accommodation to the airport for your flight home.

## Day 17 : Arrive back in the UK (Friday 12 April 2024)



Price per person in USD (NET price)	
Water Puppet Show, Hanoi	TBC
Saigon after dark – Vespa	TBC
Buffalo cart and fishing life tour – Hoi An	TBC
Dinner with Apsara dance performance	TBC

### TOUR INCLUSIONS:

Inclusions:	Non-inclusions:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International Flights from London Heathrow Other airports with a supplement</li> <li>• Overnight accommodation as shown including daily breakfast, hotels tax and service charges</li> <li>• 2 days 1-night HaLong Bay Cruise (Shared cruise/private cabin)</li> <li>• Flight from Hanoi to Danang</li> <li>• Flight from Danang to Saigon</li> <li>• Flight from Saigon to Phnom Penh</li> <li>• Boat fr4om Battambang to Siem Reap</li> <li>• All entrances as shown</li> <li>• Private transfers and transportation on tour</li> <li>• Sightseeing with local English-speaking guides (one guide in each city)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Airport Assistance Service</li> <li>• Separate luggage truck</li> <li>• Visa</li> <li>• Other meals where not mentioned in the program</li> <li>• Drinks/water at included lunches and dinners</li> <li>• Other flights &amp; airport taxes</li> <li>• Hotel early check in/ Late check-out</li> <li>• Overweight luggage</li> <li>• Personal expenses</li> <li>• Travel insurance</li> <li>• Tips &amp; gratuities</li> <li>• Other services not listed in inclusive column</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Entrance fees and boat rides</li> <li>• Meals as specified (meals only, no drinks/ water)</li> <li>• Airfares: Da Nang – Saigon / Phnom Penh – Siem Reap (Economy class with airport tax)</li> <li>• Cold towels and water on sightseeing days</li> </ul>	
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## Useful Information

Currencies: Dong, Reil

Flight time: Approx. 11 hrs 30 mins to 13 hrs 10 mins

Languages: Vietnamese, Khmer

Time zone: GMT+7

Countries: Vietnam, Cambodia

### Visa Information

Along with a valid passport, UK citizens must have a visa in order to travel to Cambodia. For the most up-to-date passport and visa information visit <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/cambodia/entry-requirements>

Visa cost is USD \$35 per person. Full details of how and when to apply will be sent with your booking confirmation.

UK Citizens do not require a visa to enter Vietnam.

We are unable to accept responsibility if you are unable to travel because you have not complied with any passport/entry/immigration requirements.

Please note that visa costs may be subject to change.

### Health

Whilst the travelling schedule shall pose no problems for people of any age in normal physical health, we would point out that in visiting a number of historical sites, paths may be uneven and we often enjoy walking tours of the main sights, therefore this holiday may not be suitable for clients of greatly impaired mobility. In the tropics temperatures and humidity levels are quite high for most of the year. Please consult your GP regarding the appropriate inoculations required for Vietnam & Cambodia at least a month before departure.

**Prices: Vietnam and Cambodia Full Tour £3599**

**Single Supplement: £450**

**Vietnam Only: £2799 (Single Supplement: £250)**

**Cambodia Only: £2499 (Single Supplement: £200)**

**Initial Deposit: £200pp to secure your booking**

**Further Deposit: £1500pp required by 1 January 2025**