

VIETNAM: JEWEL OF INDOCHINA

21 February - 7 March 2027

Angkor Wat Extension

6 - 10 March 2027

FROM
£7,260
PER PERSON

Tour Leader: Nick Van Gruisen


The Ultimate
TRAVEL COMPANY

Beginning in Hanoi, we explore Vietnam's capital, one of Asia's most fascinating cities, offering a unique blend of oriental and western charm. It is an exotic city of elegant colonial villas, bustling narrow shop filled streets and grand tree-lined boulevards. From Hanoi we continue to Halong for a serene two-night cruise, aboard an elegantly designed five-star junk, across the less frequented but none the less spectacular Lan Ha Bay where islands of bizarre rock formations rise steeply from the emerald waters.

We then fly to Hoi An, one of the Orient's major trading ports in the 16th and 17th centuries. Despite the passing of 200 years and the ravages of weather and war, the centre of Hoi An remains much the same as it was in its heyday. We spend a morning at the lively food market followed by a cooking lesson learning about local delicacies. From Hoi An we take the Hai Van Pass to Hue, the ancient imperial city located along the banks of the Perfumed River. This ancient capital of the Nguyen Dynasty remains one of the country's most important cultural and religious centres. From Hue we fly south to Ho Chi Minh City and experience this dynamic city's bustling life and colonial past.

There is also an optional post-tour extension offering the chance to explore Asia's most magnificent archaeological remains – the Khmer Temples of Angkor in Cambodia – built between the 7th and 11th centuries comprising some 70 ruins and covering an area of 200 square miles.





Temple of Literature



Hanoi Opera House

15-DAY ITINERARY, DEPARTING 21 FEBRUARY 2027

21 February London / Bangkok

Suggested flights (not included in the cost of the tour) Thai Airways TG 911 departing London Heathrow at 11.50 hrs.

22 February Bangkok / Hanoi

Arrive Bangkok at 06.15 hrs and connect to TG 560 departing Bangkok at 07.45 hrs arriving Hanoi at 09.35 hrs. Group transfer to the classical, French colonial-style Sofitel Metropole Hotel, where two nights are spent.

Lunch under own arrangements and afternoon at leisure. Optional tour of the Metropole led by the inhouse historian, including a visit to the hotel's bomb shelter. Dinner at the hotel's Spice Restaurant.

23 February Hanoi

Visit Ba Dinh Square and Ho Chi Minh's Mausoleum, housing his preserved body, and the One Pillar Pagoda, a Buddhist temple in the shape of a lotus blossom and set on a single stone pillar. Continue to Ho Chi Minh's House nearby, a simple wooden house in a tranquil setting where Ho Chi Minh lived and worked. Following this, visit the Temple of Literature, Vietnam's first university, founded in 1070 and a well-preserved example of traditional Vietnamese architecture.

Lunch at a local restaurant. Cyclo tour of the Old French Colonial Quarter, a maze of bustling streets each specialising in a different artisanal ware. Evening water puppet performance, a uniquely northern Vietnamese art form said to have originated in the flooded rice fields of the Red River Delta. Dinner at a local restaurant.

24 February Hanoi / Halong / Lan Ha Bay

Check out and drive to Halong. Take a speed boat to board the luxury junk-style ship, the Ginger, for a two-night cruise around Lan Ha Bay and Cat Ba Island. Lan Ha Bay, less visited than the better known Halong Bay, is a natural wonder of Vietnam and is dotted with thousands of islands and bizarre rock sculptures rising steeply from the emerald waters to form an extraordinary seascape. The five-star Ginger has a stunning contemporary interior with Vietnamese design features and offers 12 ensuite cabins each with a private balcony, a rooftop swimming pool, spa facilities, sun terrace, bar and restaurant serving first class cuisine.

Lunch on board, as the Ginger sets sail towards Cat Ba Island. Moor close to Cat Ba and disembark for a cycle tour around Viet Hai Village, nestled in a picturesque valley surrounded by jungle-cladded mountains, offering wonderful insights into the isolated life of the local community. Optional Vietnamese tea tasting or spa treatments. Dinner on board and optional 'Singing Bowl Meditation' class.

25 February Lan Ha Bay

Tai Chi demonstration on the terrace deck before breakfast. Morning visit to Cat Ba Island to explore the island's national park. Take scenic bus ride followed by a leisurely hike through the park which is home to a plethora of plant and animal species. Return to the ship for lunch as the Ginger sails to a secluded spot for the rest of the day's activities.

Afternoon at leisure with options including relaxing on a picturesque beach, swimming in the bay, or simply enjoying the ship's onboard facilities. Dinner on board, followed by another optional 'Singing Bowl Meditation' session.

26 February Lan Ha Bay / Hanoi / Danang

Optional Tai Chi on the terrace deck followed by breakfast as the ship sails to 'Frog Lake'. Excursion by kayak around this secluded area to explore the captivating marine landscape featuring cliffs stretching vertically out of the jade-green water. Brunch on board as the ship returns to its final mooring. Take a speed boat ashore and transfer to Hanoi Airport for a domestic flight to Danang.

Transfer to Hoi An and check in at the Anantara Hoi An, where three nights are spent. This tranquil property, with beautiful, landscaped gardens, is located on the banks of the scenic Thu Bon River in the French colonial quarter of the town, a five minutes' walk from the colourful and bustling market. Dinner at the hotel.





Streets of Hoi An



Central Post Office

27 February Hoi An

Walking tour of Hoi An, which is extremely well preserved with an eccentric mix of architecture and a fascinating blend of temples, old merchants' houses and shrines. The tour will include visits to one of these merchants' house, the 400-year-old Japanese Covered Bridge, and the Assembly Hall of the Chaozhou Chinese Congregation. Also visit the colourful market where stalls are brimming with local specialities including silk and where garments can be produced within a day or two.

Lunch at a local restaurant, on the banks of the Thu Bon River. Afternoon at leisure. Dinner under own arrangements.

28 February Hoi An

Visit the food market to buy ingredients with a chef from the Market Restaurant and Cooking School before a cooking demonstration at the school itself, which is owned by Ms Vy, one of Vietnam's best-known chefs.

Lunch of the authentic Vietnamese dishes you have prepared. Afternoon at leisure. Dinner at Ms Vy's Morning Glory restaurant.

1 March Hoi An / Hue

Depart Hoi An for Hue, driving via Danang to visit the Cham Museum, home to an exquisite collection of artefacts dating from the 2nd to the 15th centuries. Continue through the scenic Hai Van Pass to the coast.

Lunch at a local restaurant en route before continuing to Hue. Check into Ancient Hue Garden Houses, a charming collection of traditional private residences, with one to four bedrooms each, located just outside Hue in the village of Kim Long. Dinner at the hotel.

2 March Hue

Take a leisurely cruise along the Perfume River on board a traditional dragon boat to the iconic Thien Mu Pagoda. Visit the Royal Tomb of Minh Mang, the second Nguyen Emperor, who ruled from 1820-1841.

Lunch at Tha Om, a beautifully restored royal residence. Visit the Imperial Citadel, the former capital of the Nguyen Dynasty, a complex of royal palaces within a moated fortress. Continue to the Royal Tomb of Khai Dinh, one of the smaller tombs and a fusion of Eastern and Western styles. Dinner at the former home of Princess Ngoc Son, daughter of Emperor Dong Khanh, one of the best preserved garden houses in Vietnam.

3 March Hue / Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon)

Transfer to Hue airport for a domestic flight to Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon).

Lunch under own arrangements. Transfer to the Caravelle Hotel where two nights are spent. Located in the heart of the commercial, shopping and entertainment district, the Caravelle is a comfortable haven

amid the exciting city. Dinner at the hotel.

4 March Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon)

City tour of Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon) to see the city's colonial past with its boulevards and mid-19th century buildings as well as the ornate Hotel de Ville and Notre Dame Cathedral. Visit the historic Central Post Office and the Reunification Palace, site of the fall of Saigon in 1975.

Lunch at Vietnam House. Visit the War Remnants Museum. Remainder of the afternoon at leisure and dinner under own arrangements.



Sunset in Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon)



TOUR PRICES PER PERSON

Tour Price	£7,260
Single Supplement	£1,860

Please note we have not included the cost of the flights in the tour price. Please contact us for prices should you wish to book them through us.

PRICE INCLUDES

- Economy class flights Hanoi / Danang and Hue / Ho Chi Minh City
- Accommodation throughout as shown in the itinerary
- Breakfast daily; 11 lunches; 10 dinners
- Group arrival and departure transfers and transportation as per the itinerary
- All entrance fees, visits and excursions
- Gratuities in restaurants for included meals; portorage
- Gratuities to driver/s; gratuities to guide/s
- Local English-speaking guide/s
- The services of your tour leader throughout

PRICE EXCLUDES

- International flights
- Meals under own arrangements
- Travel insurance
- Items of personal expenditure (e.g. telephone calls / laundry etc.)
- Government levies or taxes introduced after costing and publication of this programme on 22/01/2026

5 March Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon)

Full day excursion to the Chu Chi Tunnels, an immense network of connecting underground tunnels built to protect the Viet Cong guerrillas during the Vietnam War. Travel to and from the tunnels by private speedboat along the Saigon River.

Lunch at a local restaurant. Farewell dinner at a local restaurant.

discover how tofu and soya bean products are traditionally made. Sample a variety of local culinary delicacies for lunch.

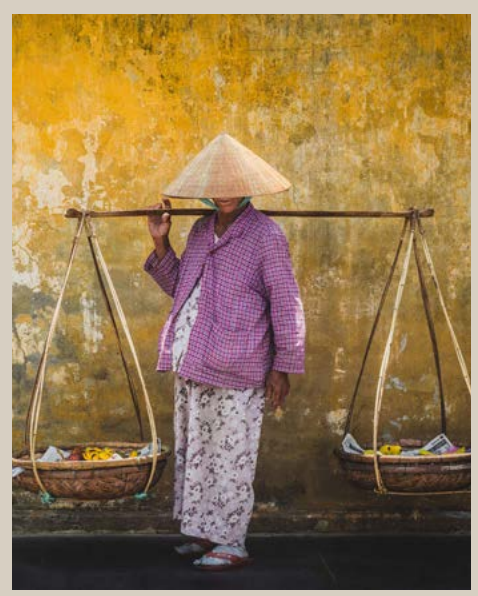
Afternoon at leisure with dinner under own arrangements. Group transfer to the airport. Suggested flights (not included) Thai Airways TG 557 departing Hi Chi Minh City at 20.10 hrs arriving Bangkok at 21.35 hrs.

6 March Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon) / Bangkok

Walking tour through one of Saigon's most historic local markets including a visit to a small tofu factory to

7 March Bangkok / London

Connect to Thai Airways flight TG 910 departing Bangkok at 00.15, arriving London Heathrow at 06.20 hrs.





Angkor Thom



Ta Prohm

OPTIONAL ANGKOR WAT EXTENSION

6 March Ho Chi Minh (Saigon / Siem Reap

Afternoon transfer to Ho Chi Minh City airport for a flight to Siem Reap. Transfer to the boutique Shinta Mani Angkor Hotel where three nights are spent. Dinner at the hotel.

7 March Siem Reap

Early morning walking tour of the beautiful and haunting overgrown Ta Prohm temple. Breakfast at Sala Kdei, a traditional Cambodian house. Continue to Banteay Kdei monastic complex followed by the vast cloistered Preah Khan and finish at Preah Rup temple.

Lunch under own arrangements. Visit the fascinating Angkor National Museum. Evening Phare Circus performance. Dinner at the hotel.

8 March Siem Reap

Sunrise visit to Angkor Wat temple complex, the largest religious

monument in the world. Return to the hotel for breakfast. Visit Tonle Sap Lake and take a boat trip through its floating villages.

Lunch under own arrangements. Late afternoon drinks at the atelier of artist Lim Muy Theam followed by a farewell dinner at a local restaurant.

9 March Siem Reap / Bangkok

Visit Angkor Thom fortified royal city with its famous central Bayon temple as well as the Terrace of the Leper Kings and the Terrace of Elephants.

Lunch under own arrangements. Afternoon at leisure with option to visit the local artisan markets. Group transfer to the airport. Suggested flights (not included) Thai Airways TG 2591 departing Siem Reap at 19.25 hrs arriving Bangkok at 20.50 hrs.

10 March London

Connect to Thai Airways flight TG 910 departing Bangkok at 00.55, arriving London Heathrow at 07.15 hrs.

OPTIONAL EXTENSION PRICE

Extension Price	£1,885
Single Supplement	£425

PRICE INCLUDES

- Economy class flight Ho Chi Minh City / Siem Reap
- Accommodation throughout as shown in the itinerary
- Breakfast daily; 3 dinners
- All entrance fees, visits, excursions and transportation as per the itinerary
- Local English-speaking guide/s

PRICE EXCLUDES

- Travel insurance
- All lunches
- Visa
- The services of your tour leader
- Gratuities in restaurants for included meals; portage
- Gratuities to driver/s and guides
- Government levies or taxes introduced after costing and publication of this programme on 22/01/2026



Angkor Wat



YOUR TOUR LEADER

Nick Van Gruisen

Raised in Northumberland, in the 1970s Nick spent five years as a professional guide in Botswana and southern Africa. He then joined the Tiger Mountain group, pioneering cultural, trekking and wildlife holidays throughout the Indian subcontinent. He founded Worldwide Journeys and Expeditions in 1991, from which The Ultimate Travel Company emerged in 1998.

020 7386 4620 | ENQUIRY@THEULTIMATETRAVELCOMPANY.CO.UK | THEULTIMATETRAVELCOMPANY.CO.UK
25-27 VANSTON PLACE LONDON SW6 1AZ