



VIETNAM PANORAMA

Classic Tour | 18 Days | Physical Level 1

Saigon – Mekong Delta – Dalat – Nha Trang – Qui Nhon
– Hoi An – Hue – Halong Bay

This all-encompassing tour not only showcases Vietnam's highlights but fully absorbs you in the rich history and culture too. Spend more time interacting with locals and visiting lesser-known places alongside the usual highlights.

- Visit Cai Rang floating market
- Unwind in stunning Nha Trang
- Discover the past of Qui Nhon
- Wander charming Hoi An
- Marvel at Hue's Imperial Citadel
- Wake to sunrise on Halong Bay
- Enjoy the Quintessence of Tonkin show

TOUR MAP



VIETNAM PANORAMA TOUR INCLUSIONS:

- Return international economy flights, taxes and current fuel surcharges (unless a land only option is selected)
- All accommodation
- All meals
- All sightseeing and entrance fees
- All transportation and transfers
- English speaking National Escort (if your group is 10 or more passengers) or Local Guides
- Vietnam visa fees for Australian passport holders (please see visa section below for further information)
- Specialist advice from our experienced travel consultants
- Comprehensive travel guides

The only thing you may have to pay for are personal expenditure e.g. drinks, optional excursions or shows, insurance of any kind, tipping, early check in or late checkout and other items not specified on the itinerary.

CLASSIC TOURS:

These tours are designed for those who wish to see the iconic sites and magnificent treasures of South America on an excellent value group tour whilst travelling with like-minded people. The tours are on a fully inclusive basis so you'll travel with the assurance that all your arrangements are taken care of. You will be accompanied by our dedicated and professional National Escorts and local guides, whose unparalleled knowledge will turn your holiday into an unforgettable experience.

PHYSICAL LEVEL 1:

Our tours come with a physical rating to guide you in selecting a holiday that suits your comfort level. Joining any of our tours involves independent mobility and the ability to stay active throughout the day, which is essential for fully enjoying the unique charm of each destination.

'Vietnam Panorama' falls under a Physical Level 1 category. This indicates a level of fitness that allows you to comfortably remain on your feet with occasional rests. Expect to effortlessly navigate boarding and disembarking from various modes of transport, including coaches, trains, and boats. You'll be walking around remarkable sites and ascending steps to capture those awe-inspiring views!

Please Consider:

- Sightseeing may often involve walking for a reasonable duration, sometimes over multiple steps, or uneven surfaces.
- Boarding and alighting from various boat sizes independently is part of the experience.

Our National Escort is dedicated to providing a high level of service and support throughout your journey. However, their primary role is to manage the daily aspects of the tour. They are unable to offer extensive personal physical assistance. We kindly ask our travelers to be prepared for the physical aspects of the tour to ensure a comfortable and enjoyable experience for everyone.

JOINING YOUR TOUR:

The tour is 18 days in duration including international flights.

Travellers booked on a 'Land Only' package, the price includes your arrival/departure airport transfers if arriving/departing on the start and conclusion date of your tour. Please advise your international flight times to our reservations team.

Join the tour on Day 1 in Saigon and end the tour on Day 17 in Hanoi. Please refer to your final itinerary for more specific meeting instructions pertaining to your departure.

ITINERARY CHANGES:

We intend to adhere to the day-to-day itinerary as printed; however, the order of events or sightseeing may change as we look to improve our tours, or as dictated by local conditions. In these circumstances, we will endeavour to make the best possible arrangements whilst maintaining the integrity of your trip.

DETAILED ITINERARY

Day- 1: Fly to Saigon

Meals: D

On arrival in Tan Son Nhat International Airport, you will be met in the arrival 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 approximately 1 hour to your hotel.



Early check-in is not included. Additional nights' before and after your tour can be arranged. Please contact our Reservations team to book.

An informal Welcome Dinner will be held on Day 2. If you miss this due to your arrival time, all information will be provided to you at breakfast the following morning.

Destination Information

Saigon - Officially renamed Ho Chi Minh City, the city is typically still called Saigon by its inhabitants. Saigon is driving Vietnam forward into the modern world, but is also a treasure trove of fascinating heritage. During the 1960s and early 1970s, Saigon was a tale of two cities under the American occupation, and was the capital of South Vietnam until the events that led to the reunification of north and south. Today, the old mixes seamlessly with the new and you can wander through timeless alleys to incense-infused temples before catching up with the present in designer malls beneath sleek skyscrapers.

Day 2: Cu Chi Tunnels

Meals: B, L, D

Confront the reality of guerrilla warfare at the Cu Chi Tunnels. The cramped tunnels were central to a few of the war's strategic operations, including the famous 1968 Tet Offensive, and they did not escape damage. American B52 bombers dropped hundreds of missiles leaving huge tell-tale craters behind.



The Cu Chi experience can be emotional for some visitors, but it offers a fascinating window into the hardship and traumas of war. This afternoon, explore modern day Saigon with its heady mix of local culture and colonial influences. You'll pass the Notre Dame Cathedral, visit the Central Post Office, the Reunification Palace and the chilling War Remnants Museum.

Destination Information

Cu Chi - The tunnels of Cu Chi are an immense network of connecting underground tunnels located in the Cu Chi district of Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon), Vietnam, and are part of a much larger network of tunnels that underlie much of the country. The Cu Chi tunnels were the location of several military campaigns during the Vietnam War, and were the Viet Cong's base of operations for the Tet Offensive in 1968. The tunnels were used by Viet Cong soldiers as hiding spots during combat, as well as serving as communication and supply routes, hospitals, food and weapon caches and living quarters for numerous North Vietnamese fighters. The tunnel systems were of great importance to the Viet Cong in their resistance to American forces, and helped to counter the growing American military effort.

Central Post Office - Located next to the Notre-Dame Cathedral. The Central Post Office building was constructed in the late 19th century. It counts Gothic, Renaissance and French influences and was designed by Auguste Henri Vildieu and Alfred Foulhoux, but is often erroneously credited as being the work of Gustave Eiffel.

Reunification Palace - Built on the site of the former Norodom Palace, is a landmark in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. It was designed by architect Ngô Viết Thụ and was the home and workplace of the President of South Vietnam during the Vietnam War. It was the site of the end of the Vietnam War during the Fall of Saigon on 30th April 1975, when a North Vietnamese Army tank crashed through its gates.

War Remnants Museum - Comprised of numerous buildings displaying military equipment, photographs and artefacts relating to the Vietnam War from 1961-1975. This museum illustrates a harrowing period in this nation's history.

Day 3: Mekong Delta Cruise

Meals: B, L, D

Drive 2 and a half hours down to the picturesque province of Ben Tre, situated along the mighty Mekong. This area is known as the 'Rice Basket of Vietnam', because its rich and fertile lands produce large amounts of rice, coconuts, vegetables and tropical fruit. Spend the day cruising and exploring these waterways before travelling to Can Tho for an overnight stay.



You will travel by motorised, wooden boats between the islands and then change to smaller, paddleboats in the palm fringed canals; sightseeing involves hopping on and off these boats, often on unsteady and slippery surfaces, sometimes without handrails or assistance. 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.

You will need to pack a smaller overnight bag for your trip to Can Tho. Main luggage will be left in safe storage at the hotel in Saigon and picked up your return.

Destination Information

Mekong Delta - Although primarily rural, the Mekong Delta is a densely populated area where life progresses around its fertile banks. The Mekong Delta is the 13th longest, and the 10th largest, by volume alone and people live, trade, travel and even go to school on the riverbanks. The rice which is cultivated in the many farming lands is said to be enough to supply the entire country with a little extra.

Day 4: Floating Markets

Meals: B, L, D

Can Tho is the largest city along the Mekong Delta and central for trade, continue sightseeing around the canals and in the city of Can Tho, stepping in and out of boats again today. Stop at the Cai Rang floating markets and soak up its vibrant atmosphere. Later, visit a local rice husking mill and a factory that produces vermicelli rice noodles before returning to Saigon, stopping for lunch enroute.



Destination Information

Cai Rang Floating Markets - The largest markets along the Mekong Delta, witness the grand scale of produce on sale and the local lives of the Vietnamese along these teeming waterways.

Day 5: Dalat Hill Station

Meals: B, L, D

Depart the bustling city of Saigon for the cooler climate and picturesque scenery of Dalat. Stop en route to sample some locally grown tea from one of the many plantations in the region of Bao Loc. The journey is around 6 to 7 hours. Arrive into Dalat in the late afternoon.



Destination Information

Dalat — Once known as “Le Petit Paris”, a French physician by the name of Alexandre Yersin promoted the charming town of Dalat to French colonials, recommending the mountain air. Nestled in amongst the green, rolling hills of central-southern Vietnam, temperatures sit between 15 to 25 degrees offering visitors a cool break from the baking plains of the Mekong Delta to the south. The beautiful greenery, the romantic atmosphere and the graceful architecture of the buildings add to Dalat’s charm.

Day 6: Dalat's Local Steam Train

Meals: B, L, D

A full day of sightseeing in Dalat today, beginning with a visit to Domain de Marie Church (built in 1943) and followed by a visit to Dalat's Flower Gardens. Next stop is an embroidery workshop. Here, you will gain an understanding of this special handicraft, kept alive for generations in Dalat.



After lunch, visit the former railway station, where you will enjoy an open-air train ride to Trai Mat hamlet (one way only). Disembark the train and drive to the colourful Dalat market, where you can stroll through and witness the daily life of the locals. End your day at a local coffee shop overlooking Xuan Huong Lake; the perfect position from which to watch the world go by.

Please note the train only operates with 20 passengers or more. If the train is not operating on the day of your visit, alternative transport will be arranged.

Destination Information

Domain de Marie Church – Located on a hill with sweeping views of Dalat, this church is admired for its beautiful French colonial architecture.

Flower Gardens – Overlooking Xuan Huong Lake, there are over 300 varieties of plants and flowers on display in these beautiful gardens.

Open Air Train Ride to Trai Hamlet - Witness serene views of the Dalat plateau, with its clusters of multi-coloured housing, ravines, valleys, greenhouses and outdoor farms from the carriage of your open-air train.

Day 7: Coastal Nha Trang

Meals: B, L, D

This morning, leave the highlands of Dalat behind and drive 3 hours to the coastal city of Nha Trang. Upon arrival at the port, board a boat for an afternoon cruise on the turquoise waters. Boarding your boat may involve navigating your way over and through other boats, moored between it and the dock, sometimes without handrails, ladders or assistance from staff.



These are ex fishing boats which have had benches and seats fitted for 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. You will have the opportunity to stop at one of the many islands, where you can enjoy a swim in the balmy waters before returning to Nha Trang.

Today's boat trip is weather dependent. Your national escort or local guide will do their best to inform the group of any changes to the itinerary as early as possible.

Destination Information

Nha Trang – The high-energy resort town of Nha Trang offers one of the nicest beaches in Vietnam boasting turquoise waters, excellent fishing, snorkelling and scuba diving.

Day 8: Qui Nhon

Meals: B, L, D

Today drive 5 to 6 hours to the coastal city of Qui Nhon. Along the way visit the Dam Market and the Po Nagar Cham Towers, a complex of granite temples. There will also be time to stop for lunch, rest and photo opportunities along the way.



Destination Information

Po Nagar Cham Towers - Ruins from the Hindu Kingdom of Champa, which ruled this region of Vietnam from the late 2nd century through to 1471.

Qui Nhon – Surrounded by green mountains on three sides and the ocean on the fourth, the city of Qui Nhon is known for its beautiful surroundings, Cham temples and nearby beaches.

Day 9: Son My and Hoi An

Meals: B, L, D

Leave Qui Nhon and travel approximately 4 hours to Son My, where you can pay homage to the victims of the My Lai massacre, known for the most notorious massacre during the Vietnam/American conflict. The memorial and museum are simple; most people find this quite confronting and emotional so you will be given time to explore on your own. In the afternoon, drive a further 4 hours arriving into Hoi An, where the remainder of the evening is at leisure.



Destination Information

Son My – This memorial and museum are a poignant reminder of this pivotal moment during the Vietnam/American conflict.

Hoi An - Perhaps more than any other place in Vietnam, Hoi An retains the feel of centuries past. Once known as Faifo, Hoi An was an influential port along the Silk Road. For over 500 years merchants from China, Japan, France and Portugal settled in the prosperous town resulting in a distinctive blend of culture, cuisine, religion and architecture.

Day 10: Explore Hoi An On Foot

Meals: B, L, D

Enjoy a morning walking tour of this laid back and wilfully traditional town to see the elaborate Japanese Covered Bridge, Chinese temple, and a traditional house occupied by the same family for over 200 years. Stop to visit the Reaching Out Arts and Crafts Workshop, a social enterprise providing employment and training to local people with disabilities.

After lunch, the rest of the day is at leisure to explore Hoi An's ancient, lantern-lined streets, or perhaps head to the beach independently.

**Destination Information**

Japanese Covered Bridge - First constructed in the 1590s to link the Japanese and Chinese quarters of the town. This iconic pink hued bridge has been restored to its former splendour.

Reaching Out — Provides opportunities for people with disabilities to learn skills and gain meaningful employment. The arts and crafts workshop provides a platform for local people to showcase their talents.

Day 11: Royal Tomb of Minh Mang

Meals: B, L, D

This morning, drive approximately 4 hours to Hue, this journey will take you over the scenic Hai Van Pass. Hue is the epitome of Vietnam's dynamic past, and considered a scholarly city. Upon arrival, explore the Royal Tomb of Minh Mang. The complex comprises of almost 40 monuments and is surrounded by gardens and pools, making it one of the more beautiful tombs.

**Destination Information**

Hue - Having been the imperial capital from 1802 until the abdication of the country's last emperor in 1945, Hue is still regarded as the centre of Vietnam's culture and religion. The city is dominated by the Imperial Citadel, reminiscent of the Forbidden City in China. There are many wonderful pagodas and temples of high significance, and it contains the Grand Tombs of the Nguyen Emperors.

Royal Tomb of Minh Mang - Emperor Minh Mang reigned in the Nguyen Dynasty, the last of the Vietnamese dynasties, from 1820-1840. The construction of his tomb was completed after his death and is said to have taken approximately 10,000 workers to complete. The complex comprises of almost 40 monuments and is surrounded by gardens and pools, making it one of the more beautiful tombs in Vietnam.

Day 12: Hue's Imperial Citadel

Meals: B, L, D

After breakfast, visit the Imperial Citadel and the Forbidden Purple City which is still being restored many years after the destruction caused by street fighting and bombing during the American War in Vietnam. Afterwards, drive to the outskirts of Hue to visit An Hien House, the original residence of Emperor Tu Duc's 18th daughter.



This afternoon, enjoy an hour-long cruise along the Perfume River to Hue's oldest and most beautiful pagoda, Thien Mu, built on a hillock overlooking the river. Boarding your cruise could involve navigating your way over other boats, moored between it and the dock, sometimes without handrails, ladders or assistance from staff.

Destination Information

Imperial Citadel - A walled fortress accompanied by cannons, artilleries and surrounded by a moat for protection. Inside the Citadel are numerous gates, courtyards and the Forbidden Purple City.

Forbidden Purple City - Constructed for personal use by the Imperial family, their concubines and eunuchs. This royal structure is still being restored many years after the destruction caused by street fighting and bombing during the American war in Vietnam. Wander the grounds and foundations whilst viewing the remaining woodwork and architecture.

An Hien House - This house is an excellent example of traditional Vietnamese architecture. Massive pillars support a large tiled roof, with the family altar in the middle.

Thien Mu Pagoda - This seven-storey octagonal tower built on a hillock, overlooking the Perfume River is Hue's oldest and most beautiful pagoda. Wander the grounds where bonsai, ponds and the smell of incense set a peaceful backdrop.

Day 13: Old Quarter Cyclo Tour

Meals: B, L, D

This morning, fly 1 hour and 20 minutes to Hanoi. Upon arrival, you will visit the Fine Arts Museum for an overview of art and its development in Vietnam. After lunch, experience an exhilarating cyclo ride through Hanoi's Old Quarter. Each cyclo takes one passenger and is operated by a cycle driver behind the carriage. Wrap up your cyclo ride with a strong Vietnamese coffee at a café overlooking Hoan Kiem Lake - an important site in Vietnamese folklore.



Destination Information

Hanoi - With a population of approximately four million, Hanoi is a charming and richly historic city of lakes, shaded boulevards and leafy open parks. The centre is an architectural museum piece housing groups of ochre coloured buildings holding the air of provincial French towns of the 1930s, a “Paris of the Orient” as people have called it.

Fine Arts Museum - Housed in what was once the French Ministry of Information with a classical colonial structure. The artefacts on display range from ancient to contemporary.

Hanoi Old Quarter - A maze of streets weaving through Hanoi and dating back to the 13th century. Each street specialises in merchants and artisans selling their wares of silk, silver, wood and more.

Day 14: Discover Hanoi

Meals: B, L, D

Discover the sights of Hanoi today. First stop will be the Ho Chi Minh Quarter and pass Ho Chi Minh’s Mausoleum, followed by the Humble House on Stilts and the One Pillar Pagoda. Next, drive to the serene Temple of Literature, Hanoi’s first university. Your afternoon is at leisure.



Destination Information

Ho Chi Minh Quarter - Dedicated to the father of modern Vietnam and where Ho Chi Minh's Mausoleum stands in Ba Dinh Square. Ho Chi Minh first declared independence from French rule in 1945.

One Pillar Pagoda - Rebuilt in 1955 after damage during the French evacuation, the pagoda is made of wood and sits on a single pillar. Designed to reflect the shape of a lotus flower emerging from the water, it has become a popular spot for locals to enjoy the tranquil surroundings.

Humble House on Stilts - In the grounds of the Presidential Palace sits the 2 storey wooden home of Ho Chi Minh who ruled Vietnam from here until his death in 1969.

Temple of Literature - Hanoi's first university dating back to 1070 and a historical centre of learning, now dedicated to Confucian worship.

Day 15: Halong Bay

Meals: B, L, D

Drive around 2 and a half hours today from Hanoi to Halong, where you will take an overnight cruise to the far-most corners of the bay by boat. Boarding your boat could involve navigating your way over and through other boats, moored between it and the dock, sometimes without handrails, ladders or assistance from staff.



Enjoy lunch onboard as you cruise out into the bay, stopping to anchor for an afternoon of activities (which are subject to change due to cruise selection and weather conditions). Sightseeing includes visiting underground caves on the islands, which require climbing up and down steps inside and outside of the caves. End the day on deck with a drink in hand to watch the sunset over the bay followed by a freshly prepared dinner, before retiring to your cabin for the night.

You will need to pack a smaller overnight bag for your trip to Halong Bay. Main luggage will be left in safe storage at the hotel in Hanoi and picked up your return.

Please note: Weather conditions such as mist, fog, wind, rain and storms may delay the departure time of your cruise, or in some cases your cruise may be cancelled. Notifications of any delays or cancellations may not be known until your group's arrival in Halong Bay. If your cruise is cancelled after your arrival in Halong Bay, you will have lunch in Halong City and return to Hanoi. If notification of the cruise cancellation is given prior to your departure for Halong Bay an alternative day trip will be arranged to Hoa Lu and Tam Coc or 'Halong Bay on Land', an area located approximately 2 hours from Hanoi. Our guides will make every effort to inform the group at the earliest possible moment should there be any itinerary changes.

Destination Information

Halong Bay - Compared to the landscape of the limestone islets of Guilin in China and Krabi in southern Thailand, Halong Bay shares a common border with China in the north and harbours some of the most stunning scenery in Vietnam. Unique rock sculptures jut out dramatically from the clear emerald waters of the Gulf of Tonkin and numerous grottoes have created an enchanting, timeless world, looking out onto the horizon with the sails of the junks and sampans completing the picture.

Day 16: Halong Bay – Hanoi

Meals: B, L, D

Spend the morning sailing through Halong Bay. After an early lunch (or brunch meal), disembark your cruise and return to Hanoi. This evening, attend The Quintessence of Tonkin show, an artistic open-air performance celebrating the rich history of northern Vietnam.



Day 17-18: Depart Hanoi

Meals: B

You will be transferred from the hotel to the airport, according to the departure time of your international flight. Any time before your flight is at leisure. Fly overnight, arriving in Australia the following day.

Check out is usually at noon – please contact our Reservations team if you would like to prebook Late Checkout.

Please note: Only breakfast is provided on the group's day of departure.



VIETNAM PANORAMA TRAVEL INFORMATION

VISAS:

Entry visas are required by all visitors to Vietnam and Wendy Wu Tours Visa Department can assist you with the process of obtaining a visa. Please be advised that your passport must have at least six months validity left on it when you arrive back into Australia.

Please note the visa procedures and requirements may change at any time. These changes are often made by the relevant embassy or consulate, Wendy Wu Tours acts as a third party and has no influence on the process of a visa.

Wendy Wu Tours does not accept responsibility for lost or undelivered items.

All information with regards to visas will be updated regularly on our website as we find visas process' are changing on regular basis. For the latest information on visa procedures, processing times and requirements, please kindly refer to our website <https://www.wendywutours.com.au/help-and-advice/passports-and-visas/>

INSURANCE:

We strongly recommend that you take out a policy as soon as you pay your deposit. Wendy Wu Tours cannot in any way be made liable for any additional cost incurred by the customer on any tour due to the customer not having adequate travel insurance.

We also encourage all customers to take a copy of their travel insurance documents (especially relevant international contact numbers) with them while on tour. We advise that you check the inclusions and procedures for lodging claims prior to your departure. These documents should be stored separately from the original.

EATING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA:

Southeast Asia is home to an incredibly rich food history. The local cuisine is known for its intense flavours, spices and some of the freshest ingredients you can find. In general, meals include either rice or noodles and are packed full of flavour. Lemongrass, ginger, lime leaves, coriander, fish sauce and soy sauce are used in many local dishes. Whilst Southeast Asian food has a reputation for being hot and spicy, each region actually has its own distinct characteristics. Vietnam, for example, is perhaps best known for its fresh and aromatic dishes – relying heavily on flavours from fresh herbs such as mint, basil and dill.

When dining in Southeast Asia, although some restaurants have adopted a western approach to dining, expect some restaurants to follow the traditional communal style of eating. Typically, this will mean each diner has their own small bowl and may serve themselves from a variety of shared dishes. At some local restaurants, appetizers and main courses might be served when they are ready instead of following a particular order.

Determining when it's appropriate to use chopsticks, forks or spoons can be challenging for some travellers, even other Asians, as each country has different customs. In Vietnam, dishes are normally placed in the centre and people serve food for themselves with their own chopsticks and bowl. Usually, chopsticks or other utensils are provided to scoop the food into your bowl to prevent your own chopsticks from touching the food that remains on the table. Dining in Southeast Asia is fairly casual with not too many rules. Leaving food on the plate is not considered rude.

Those with dietary requirements - just make sure to inform your booking agent of any specific requirements well in advance of your trip. Please read your travel guide, which you will receive with your final documents for more information about eating in Southeast Asia. We recommend that when it comes to Asia food, you stay open minded and try to be adventurous!

GROUP SIZE:

Most of our groups consist of 10 travellers or more and will be accompanied by a national escort. There will usually be no more than 28 travellers in a Classic Tour group, although you may encounter other Wendy Wu tour groups while you are travelling.

All our departures are guaranteed to operate with a minimum of 8 travellers booked (unless cancelled due to factors beyond our control). However, at our discretion we may operate departures with a smaller group size as we try to operate advertised departures wherever it is viable to do so. For groups with fewer than 10 travellers, departures will operate with local guides only.

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 to four-star standard, but please note that there is no international classification system for hotels and differences in facilities and quality do exist between Australia and Vietnam. All group tour hotels have private western bathroom facilities, air conditioning, TV and telephone. Plumbing and electricity supplies can be erratic and quite often the power in hotel rooms is turned off while guests are out of the room. If you experience any difficulty, please speak to your National Escort/Local Guide. 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.

Solo travellers: If you are a solo traveller and willing to share a room, you will not have to pay a single supplement for any hotel rooms. Willing to share single travellers booking within 75 days of the first day of a group tour will be subject to availability. If no suitable match is available at time of booking you will be required to pay all single supplements.

PORTERAGE:

Please be aware that portage is not included on our tours in Southeast Asia. You will therefore need to be able to handle your own luggage within the hotel and when using transportation like trains and coaches.

TRANSPORT:

Coaches: Coaches with air conditioning are used on our group tours for city sightseeing, short excursions to the countryside and longer transfers where necessary. **However, mini buses may be used for smaller groups (under 10 passengers).** Roads in Vietnam have generally improved over recent years, but traffic and/or weather conditions may extend driving times. Road construction work usually covers an enormous section of road - not just one or two kilometres as you may be used to. For this reason, the timings listed in the itinerary are approximations only.

Planes: Internal flights are based on economy class, with reputable airlines.

TIPPING POLICY:

Tipping while on holiday is common in most parts of the world and Southeast Asia is no exception. However, it is not always clear who it is appropriate to tip and how much. Furthermore, travellers may not have the right amounts of cash available at the right time. In order to avoid any inconvenience Wendy Wu Tours operates a tipping policy where a stated amount is given to your national escort at the beginning of your tour and tips are disbursed to local guides and drivers throughout your tour. The amount is designed to be at a reasonable level for travellers while being fair to the local people and includes a gratuity for the national escort.

If you are travelling in a smaller group with local guides only, then tipping is paid in each destination. To be fair to the guides we ask for slightly higher amounts per traveller with small groups.

We generally find that most customers appreciate the convenience of our tipping policy but we do recognize that it may not suit everyone. However, as this is a group tour we ask that everyone follows the same protocol to be fair to other group members and to ensure smooth operation of your tour.

DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTHEAST ASIA:

Although Southeast Asia is developing quickly, it still lacks the international standards of civil infrastructure and tourist facilities. Concepts of personal responsibility are also different to those in Australia. Consequently, tourist and public facilities may not uphold the same safety standards as in Australia; for example, you may see a hole in the road without a warning sign or safety barricade. 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, refer to notices and follow advice from your National Escort or Local Guides.

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS:

If you are travelling within the below Vietnamese Public Holidays please note that celebrations can last a couple of days and during these times some businesses will be closed and coach, air and train travel may be affected. Tourist attractions will be open, but may be crowded. In Vietnam, Tet Holiday is 29th January 2025 & 17th February 2026; International Labour Day is on 1st May every year; Reunification Day is on 30th April every year and National Independence Day is on 2nd September every year.

SOUVENIRS:

We want to be able to give you an opportunity to buy souvenirs, so we include some stops at museums or exhibitions which demonstrate a craft or product unique to that region with pieces available to buy. We understand that souvenir hunting is not for everyone, so we aim to take you to places, which hold local interest. We trust you will enjoy these opportunities to learn about local arts and crafts and understand their historical and cultural importance.

LUGGAGE:

All travellers are limited to two items of luggage each: a suitcase with a maximum weight of 20kg and one piece of hand luggage with a maximum weight of 5kg. It is essential that your luggage is lockable. Please note that authorities will only allow bottles onto the aircraft if they have been checked in as main baggage. Bottles in hand luggage may be confiscated.

PERSONAL EXPENSES:

You will need to take some extra money to cover drinks, laundry and souvenirs, plus any additional sightseeing that may be offered to you. Based on the advice of previous customers an approximate amount of \$300AUD per person, per week should be sufficient; however, for those that can't resist a bargain or may wish to participate in all of the optional excursions, consider allocating a higher amount.

CLIMBING STEPS:

Sightseeing at nearly all of the palaces, fortresses and some temples involves climbing quite a number of steps. These palaces were built to provide defense against potential invaders so nearly all of them stand on top of a hill, while the interiors have layers of narrow hallways and steps to slow down the advance of enemies once they were inside. The steps tend to be quite large, not level and sometimes without handrails. Hindu and Buddhist temples or pagodas also tend to be built at an elevation, as this is the most auspicious position according to ancient beliefs. This means you sometimes need to walk from the bus park to the entrance, and/or need to climb some steps inside.

People with knee or hip injuries, who have poor balance or are otherwise unable to complete these activities independently should consider the suitability of this itinerary carefully.

VACCINATIONS AND YOUR HEALTH:

We recommend that you contact either your GP or Travelvax (1300 360 164) for advice on vaccinations and travel health. Travelvax has a comprehensive website that you may also find useful www.travelvax.com.au

BEFORE YOU LEAVE:

We strongly recommend registering your travel plans with www.smarttraveller.gov.au as in the event of an emergency, Australian Consular assistance will be more readily available. You can also access the Australian Government's travel advisory service for up to date information about your destination on the same website.

AFTER YOUR BOOKING:

Once you have booked with Wendy Wu Tours, you will receive a confirmation invoice including a visa application form (if applicable), and a help sheet. Your final documentation pack will be sent to you approximately 2-3 weeks prior to departure.

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