

American Celebration of Music in Vietnam

Hanoi – Halong – Hue – Hoi An – Saigon – Cu Chi – Tay Ninh

Standard Tour #5 (10 nights / 12 days)

Day 1

Depart via scheduled airline service to Hanoi, Vietnam. Enjoy full meal and beverage service and in-flight entertainment during this trans-Pacific overnight flight. Cross the International Date Line during this flight

Day 2

Hanoi

(D)

Arrive at Hanoi. Meet your MCI Vietnamese Tour Manager, who will assist the group to awaiting chartered motor coach for a transfer to the hotel. Along the way to the hotel, we will enjoy a brief orientation tour of Hoan Kiem Lake, the French Quarter and Old Quarter of Hanoi, time permitting. This evening we will attend a Water Puppets performance at the Municipal Water Puppets Theater and a Welcome Dinner at a local restaurant

The Vietnamese nation was born among the lagoons and marshes of the Red River Delta around 4000 years ago and for most of its independent existence has been ruled from Hanoi, Vietnam's small, elegant capital lying in the heart of the northern delta. Given the political and historical importance of Hanoi and its burgeoning population of three million, it's still a surprisingly low-key city, with the character of a provincial town

Day 3

Hanoi

(B,L,D)

Following breakfast at the hotel, we will enjoy a city tour with visits to the Temple of Literature, Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum and Presidential Palace, Ho Chi Minh Stilt House, One Pillar Pagoda and the famous "Hanoi Hilton" prison

We will have lunch at a local restaurant in Hanoi

The afternoon will be spent at our leisure and prepare for this evening performance

Evening Concert at Hanoi Opera House

Day 4

Hanoi / Halong Bay

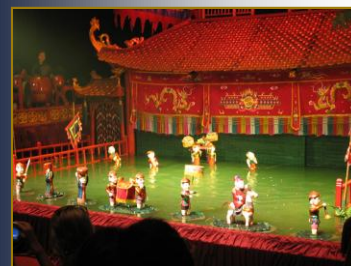
(B,L,D)

This morning will start with breakfast in the hotel, followed by hotel checkout. ***We will then visit a high school or college class (providing that school is in session) and will participate in a cultural exchange and enjoy lunch with the students***

We will then drive north to the Bac Ninh Province where we will visit a local village and enjoy a traditional performance at the Communal House

We will then continue to travel along the Red River Delta, arriving in Halong Bay in the late afternoon

The Ha Long bay, dotted with 1,600 limestone islets rising from emerald waters, is the best known natural wonder of Vietnam. Because of their precipitous nature, most of the islands are uninhabited and unaffected by a human presence. The site's outstanding scenic beauty is complemented by its great biological interest. The islands feature endless numbers of beaches, grottoes, and caves. Ha Long means "where the dragon goes into the sea". According to a



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legend, as a great dragon who lived in the mountains ran towards the sea, its tail gouged out valleys which later filled out with water, leaving only bits of land over the surface, the many tiny islets

Day 5 **Halong Bay** **(B,L,D)**

After breakfast, we will spend most of the day discovering Halong Bay by private boat. The 6-hour cruise will pass many beautiful islands and will stop at one of the most gorgeous caves on the bay. We will swim (weather permitting) in the gulf of Tonkin, of the South China Sea

Lunch will be served on the cruise

We will return to the mainland in the afternoon

Evening performance at Theatre in Ha Long City

Day 6 **Halong Bay / Hue** **(B,L,D)**

After breakfast at the hotel, we will leave for the airport for a flight to Hue. Upon our arrival to Hue, we will enjoy a late lunch before boarding a boat trip on the Perfume River

We will then visit the Thien Mu Temple and Hue Ancient Citadel before returning to the city in the late afternoon

This ancient capital, also known as Thua Thien Hue, was founded on the northern bank of Perfume River in the 17th century by Nguyen Dynasty. Nowadays, the city, about 660 kilometers from Hanoi, looks more like a massive open-air museum with hundreds of temples, pagodas, palaces and tombs. Some parts of the city were badly damaged during the war but there are still many notable structures worth a visit

Day 7 **Hue** **(B,L,D)**

Following breakfast, we will drive to the Duc Son Pagoda's Care orphanage, which is on the outskirts of the city. We will have the opportunity to meet the children, ranging in age from 2 months to 18 years old, and visit with the nuns. We will then return to our hotel, where we will have time to relax and prepare for the evening performance

Evening performance at the City Theater

Day 8 **Hue / Hoi An** **(B,L,D)**

After breakfast in the hotel, we will check out and drive to Hoi An. Along the way we will drive through Danang and be able to visit the fascinating Champa Museum, famous China Beach and the Marble Mountains

Once we reach Hoi An, we will have the rest of the day to relax at the beach

Hoi An is a small town in Central Vietnam famous for its wooden houses, for its family chapels, for its Assembly Halls and for its silk shops. The town of Hoi An, known as Faijo in Europe, played a central role in the commerce between Vietnam and the rest of the world from the 16th to the 19th century

Day 9 **Hoi An / Saigon** **(B,L,D)**

After breakfast at the hotel, we will catch a flight to Saigon. Along the way to the hotel in Saigon, we will enjoy a brief orientation tour of the city. We will be able to see the Notre Dame Cathedral, Central Post Office, Reunification Palace, and Ben Thanh Market

We will have the afternoon free, where we may relax and prepare for our performance

Evening performance at the Sai Gon Conservatory



Ho Chi Minh City (formerly Saigon) is the heart and soul of Vietnam. It's a bustling, dynamic and industrious centre, the largest city in the country, the economic capital and the cultural trendsetter. Yet within the teeming metropolis are the timeless traditions and beauty of an ancient culture

Day 10 **Saigon** **(B,L,D)**

Early in the morning we will depart for Cu Chi to visit the tunnels, where we will have the opportunity to go into the underground tunnels
We will then continue on to Tay Ninh to visit the Cao Dai Temple, where a prayer service is held every day at noon. Caodaism was founded in the 1920's by using a combination of teachings from Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, Hinduism, Christianity, Islam and other religions into one religion to promote peace
We will have lunch and then travel back to Saigon
There will be time in the afternoon to relax

Day 11 **Saigon** **(B,L,D)**

Following breakfast in the hotel, ***we will have the option to participate in mass at the Notre Dame Cathedral***
We will then visit the Chinatown area, a Buddhist Temple, the Reunification Palace and the War Museum
The afternoon will be free
We may choose to spend the rest of the day sightseeing or shopping for souvenirs
Evening Farewell Dinner and overnight

Day 12 **Depart for home** **(B)**

Breakfast will be served upon awakening. Transfer to Saigon's International Airport for return flight
Arrive home in the evening of the same day

This is a very flexible itinerary. *Except for confirmed appointments and performances, the places of interest and the sequence of sightseeing might be changed if necessary or desirable. In the event of an unavoidable conflict in the performance and the sightseeing schedule, the concert schedule will prevail, and it may be necessary to exclude some sightseeing activities.*

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