

SPLENDOURS OF VIETNAM

Saigon, Can Tho, Dalat, Nha Trang, Hoi An, Hanoi & Halong Bay



Marvel in the delights of this in-depth 17 day, 15 night journey spanning the entire length of Vietnam. Experience this country of contrasts encompassing traditional floating markets, the colonial hilltop town of Dalat, beautiful beaches of Hoi An, and the ancient imperial city of Hue. Discovering rich history whilst exploring more remote areas, this tour combines the famous landmarks and hidden gems of Vietnam.

This document aims to give you all the information that you require for a smooth and comfortable trip to Vietnam. Please take the time to read this dossier and to familiarise yourself with all the aspects of your tour. It includes important information such as flight details, visa requirements and travel insurance.

Your included meal guide:

B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner

DAY 1: UK to Saigon

Depart London on your scheduled, overnight flight to Saigon International Airport.

DAY 2: Saigon B/L/D

Also known as Ho Chi Minh, the dynamic city of Saigon is the start point of the tour. Spend half a day visiting the Notre Dame Cathedral, the former Presidential Palace and the War Remnants Museum before enjoying a local Vietnamese welcome dinner.

DAY 3: Saigon to Can Tho B/L/D

After breakfast visit Cao Dai temple before experiencing the fascinating network of rivers in the Mekong Delta. Journey, by motor boat, to the atmospheric Cai Be floating market to watch the locals trading. Visit a small family business and immerse yourself in the nature of Binh Hoa Phuoc Village. Fresh river food, traditional folk music and a bonsai garden await you before continuing to Vinh Long and then on to Can Tho, the largest town in the Mekong Delta.

DAY 4: Can Tho to Saigon B/L/D

Your morning in Can Tho will begin with a gentle trip through the picturesque canals and waterways in a small boat, taking in the sultry scenery and daily activities of the small boat vendors of the floating markets who live along these Mekong canals, as well as stopping at the spectacular Cai Rang floating market – the largest in the entire Mekong Delta. Before cruising back to land enjoy tasting tropical fruits at the Ba Cong Garden House. After enjoying lunch at a local restaurant you will be transferred back to your hotel in Saigon.

DAY 5: Saigon to Dalat B/L/D

This morning travel to the underground village of Cu Chi and discover the incredible 200km network of tunnels where the Viet Cong lived and fought during the war. Transfer to Saigon for a local lunch before catching your flight to Dalat.

DAY 6: Dalat B/L/D

During this full day tour you will visit the French colonial town of Dalat, located in the South Central highlands. Explore the unique Railway Station and marvel at the Linh Phuoc Pagoda. The cultural north gives you the chance to understand the daily life of the Lach minority, the indigenous people of Dalat and enjoy a traditional Gong Music show. A cable car ride allows you to take in the panoramic views of Dalat before heading down to the beautiful Tuyen Lam Lake, surrounded by pine forests and the serene Truc Lam Zen Monastery. Finishing in the west, visit the Bao Dai Summer Palace to learn more about Vietnam's history.

DAY 7: Dalat to Nha Trang B/L/D

Leaving Dalat, you will transfer to the beach resort of Nha Trang for lunch. In the afternoon, visit some of the cultural attractions in and around the area to gain an excellent insight into the history and culture of the area. Begin with Long Son Pagoda, built in commemoration of the monks and nuns who died whilst fighting the Diem Government, and then see the Po Nagar Temples – fascinating examples of Cham architecture situated on Mount Cu Lao. Finish the day with some shopping at Dam Market.

DAY 8: Nha Trang B/L/D

Today you will enjoy a day of island hopping, starting with a trip to Tri Nguyen Aquarium on the Mieu Island. Continue to Mun Island, the best place for snorkelling in Nha Trang and blessed with a wealth of colourful coral reefs and marine life. Have time to relax or take part in some water sports at Mot Island or Tranh Beach Island. Enjoy lunch on Con Se Tre Island, before transferring back to your hotel in Nha Trang.

DAY 9: Nha Trang to Hoi An B/L/D

After breakfast fly to Danang for your transfer to Hoi An for lunch before an afternoon tour. You will visit the Japanese Covered Bridge Pagoda, constructed in 1593 by the Japanese community. Next see the Sa Huynh Museum which contains exhibitions from the earliest period of Hoi An's history. You will also see the Phuoc Kien Assembly Hall, a Chinese pagoda dedicated to the Goddess of the Sea. Finally, finish the tour with a visit to a lantern making workshop and visit one of the many local tailors who can make up bespoke clothing at incredible prices.

DAY 10: Hoi An B/L/D

From your hotel, you will be taken to a port where you will embark on a boat trip to Thanh Ha pottery village to learn about the daily life of the local people that live there. See various pottery items being made before returning to the boat to visit Kim Bong carpentry village where you will learn about the history of the village and see their local handicrafts.

DAY 11: Hoi An B/L/D

Enjoy a free day to relax or further explore the town at your leisure.

DAY 12: Hoi An to Hue B/L/D

The scenic drive from Hoi An hugs the coastline to Hue, the former capital of Vietnam. With a stop at the Marble Mountain to see the five marble and limestone hills, you will then reach Hue to visit the ancient Forbidden City. You will have some free time at Dong Ba Market before enjoying dinner at a local restaurant.

DAY 13: Hue to Hanoi B/L/D

Begin your day by boarding a traditional Dragon boat for a tranquil trip along the Perfume River.

Stop at Thien Mu Pagoda and the Royal Mausoleums of Emperor Tu Duc, who ruled Hue over 100 years ago, before visiting the UNESCO World Heritage Site of the Royal Tomb of Khai Dinh. Later, fly to Hanoi.

DAY 14: Hanoi B/L/D

A full day tour of this historic city begins with the Ho Chi Minh Complex where the father of modern day Vietnam declared the nation's independence in 1945. Visit sites including the Presidential Palace and One Pillar Pagoda, then drive to the Temple of Literature. After lunch, visit the Vietnam Museum of Ethnology before the evening highlight – a Water Puppet Performance, a unique form of Vietnamese art derived from the wet rice civilisation of South East Asia.

DAY 15: Hanoi to Halong Bay B/L/D

This memorable day takes you to the awe-inspiring Halong Bay where you will explore these islands on a luxury cruise boat, passing local towns and intricate limestone formations on the way. Take a tour of Vung Vieng fishing village by rowing boat, a settlement completely floating

on water and dating back hundreds of years. Anchoring at Ho Dong Tien, a cooking demonstration will take place, followed by a sumptuous seafood dinner on board before you retire to your cabin for the evening.

DAY 16: Halong Bay to Hanoi Brunch/D

Start your day with some calming Tai Chi before your boat then takes you to discover the prehistoric 'Surprise Cave' before cruising back to the mainland. In the afternoon you will travel back to Hanoi.

DAY 17: Hanoi to the UK or Cambodia B/L

Following breakfast you will depart for Hoa Lu to visit the temples of Dinh King and Le King, built in the 10th Century for the heroic kings in Chinese War. Next travel on to Tam Coc for lunch and travel on a local bamboo boat in Hoang Long River. On the way you will pass through three enormous caves and the striking limestone formations that the area is renowned for, before returning to Hanoi for your evening flight back to the UK, or continue on to your Cambodia extension.

Hotels

Saigon (2 nights): 4★ Golden Central Hotel - 140 Ly Tu Trong, Ben Thanh Ward, District 1, Saigon. Contact number: 0084 838 270 666

Can Tho (1 night): 4★ Ninh Kieu 2 - 2 Hai Ba Trung, FTan An, Ninh Kieu District, Can Tho City. Contact number: 0084 710 3821 171

Dalat (2 nights): 4★ Ngoc Lan - Nguyễn Chí Thanh, Đà Lạt, Lâm Đồng, Vietnam, Contact number: 0084 633 838 838

Nha Trang (2 nights): 4★ Galliot Nha Trang - 61A Nguyen Thien Thuat Nha Trang, Khanh Hoa, Nha Trang, Vietnam, Contact number: 0084 913449962

Hoi An (3 nights): 4★ Le Belhamy - Hamlet 1, Dien Duong Village, Dien Ban District, Hoi An. Contact number: 0084 510 3941 888

Hue (1 night): 4★ Huong Giang - 51 Le Loi street, Hue city, Vietnam Contact number: 0084 54 3822122

Halong Bay (1 night): Victory Cruise boat (or similar)

Hanoi (3 nights): 4★ Sunway Hotel - 19 Pham Dinh Ho Street, Hai Ba Trung District, Hanoi, Vietnam, Contact number: 0084 4 3971 3888



All accommodation is 4★ and features an en suite bathroom, air-conditioning, satellite TV and a hairdryer. Most hotels offer a safety deposit box. Mercury Holidays has visited and inspected all of the hotels to ensure that they meet the high standards of service which we require for our clients. If the hotels detailed are not available alternatives will be used of a similar standard. Final confirmation of your hotels will be sent in a document approximately two weeks before you travel.

Meals

Breakfast is always western style & served in the hotel each morning. Lunch and dinner will be taken in local Vietnamese restaurants. A variety of restaurants are visited giving you the chance to experience a range of dishes.

On your arrival

On your arrival in Saigon you will be met by a representative from our local agent, Lac Viet (LV) Travel, holding a sign displaying: "Mercury Holidays". The Mercury Holidays/Vietnam Travel Service representative will show you to your transfer vehicle. Your guide will be able to answer any queries. However, if you need to contact LV Travel during your stay the details are:

Lac Viet Travel (LV) Head Office, Hanoi
Floor 18,
VTC Online Building,
No 18,
Tam Trinh Str,
Hai Ba Trung District,
Hanoi,
Vietnam
Telephone : 0084 439 413 748

Emergency contact information

Please find below the emergency contact details for LV Travel head office, Hanoi

Contact	Telephone number
Anna Hanh	Office: 0084(0) 983 096 032
Ms Ly	Office: 0084 439 413 750 Mobile: 0084 989 200 119

Flight and Airport Information

Your flight is to Saigon International Airport with Vietnam Airlines (VN), departing from London Heathrow Terminal 4.

Route	Depart	Arrive	Flight Duration	Flight Number
London Heathrow - Saigon	11:15	06:15	11 hrs 40 mins	VN50
Saigon - Dalat	17:50	18:40	50 mins	VN1382
Cam Ranh - Da Nang	09:20	10:20	1 hour	VN1942
Hue - Hanoi	15:30	16:40	1 hours 10 mins	VN1542
Hanoi - London Heathrow	00:30	06.40	12 hrs 10 mins	VN55

IMPORTANT: Please note that all flight times are subject to change. Final flight details will be confirmed on your e-ticket and final documentation which will be sent to you approximately 10 days before departure.

Baggage Allowance

Baggage allowance (per person): Each passenger is entitled to 30kg of hold luggage. Hand luggage: One piece not exceeding 7Kg and with maximum total dimensions not exceeding 115 cm (56 cm x 36cm x 23 cm). Should you wish to take additional luggage you will need to pay extra at check-in.

Airport Extras

If you wish to arrange Airport car parking, lounges or accommodation at preferential rates, we recommend you book this in advance with Holiday Extras - Tel. 0871 360 2000, quoting HX313.

Visas

A visa is required for entry into Vietnam. We work closely with The Travel Visa Company who will be able to arrange your visa for you on your behalf. Please call them on 01270 250 590 and quote "Mercury Holidays". The cost of the visa is £98.50. The visas take around 10 working days to issue and are only valid for 3 months from the date of entry. We therefore recommend that you apply for your visa 8 weeks before travel, however please be aware that your passport will be required for the application so make sure that you will not need it during this time. Alternatively you can visit the Embassy of Vietnam in London: 12-14 Victoria Road, London, W8 5RD. If you have booked the Temples of Cambodia extension following your tour, you will need to purchase a visa for Cambodia costing USD \$30 on arrival at the airport in Siem Reap. Please note that you will be required to bring a passport photo with you as well as USD \$30 cash in order to apply for your visa on arrival in Cambodia. *This visa information is a guide line only and are subject to change, up to date information regarding the process and fees will be advised at the time of calling the Travel Visa Company.*

Insurance

You must obtain suitable travel insurance prior to departure. Mercury Holidays is partnered with Holiday Extras which offer insurance at the following prices:

Age in years	Up to 64	65-74	75-85
Up to 17 days cover	£42	£79	£135
Up to 24 days cover	£48	£94	£146

Worldwide (excluding USA)

For all persons 86 years and over, please contact us for insurance prices. Please ensure you provide us with the name of your insurer, policy number and their 24 hour emergency contact number as soon as possible. Mercury Holidays will not be liable for any

costs incurred by you due to your failure to take out suitable travel insurance from the date of booking.

Health and Vaccinations

We recommend that you consult your local GP for advice on vaccinations & travel health before departure. It is not advisable to drink the tap water.

Physical Accessibility

This tour is accessible to most people with an average level of fitness and normal mobility. It involves full days of sightseeing, often on foot, and includes some climbing of stairs and getting on and off coaches and boats. This tour is not suitable for anyone with walking difficulties.

Group Size

The minimum number of travellers in your group will be 10, and the maximum will be 40. If in the unlikely event there are less than 10 people booked on your tour date then you may be asked to change to a different date. A full refund will be made available to you should this alternative not be suitable.

Tour Guides

This is a fully escorted tour, meaning that you will be met by a local guide in each of the cities which you visit, ensuring that you have first-hand knowledge at all times.

Tippling

Tippling is common practice and seen as a way of life in Vietnam. It is customary to tip both your driver and guide approximately £2.00 (\$3.00) per person per day in total. This will be collected at the end of each destination visited for your convenience. Tipping for the porters at your hotels and the crew during the Halong Bay Cruise will be at your discretion. Tips are accepted in the local currency, US dollars and British pounds.

Currency Exchange

The currency in Vietnam is the Vietnamese Dong, known as VND. You can exchange your currency in Vietnam, however US Dollars are widely accepted in Vietnam should you wish to keep an alternative currency on you.

Personal Expenses

You will need to take some extra money with you to cover any personal purchases, such as souvenirs, laundry and extra drinks and snacks. Approximately £300-£400 per person will be sufficient for the duration of the tour.

Itinerary changes

The order of events and sightseeing may vary according to local conditions or for operational purposes. The schedules of the domestic airlines in country are subject to frequent changes. For this reason, we have indicated approximate times only. Your local guide will inform you of any schedule changes as they are informed of them. Some road construction and/or weather conditions may lengthen the driving times. Our intention is to adhere to the day-to-day itinerary as printed; however order of events and sightseeing may vary according to local conditions.

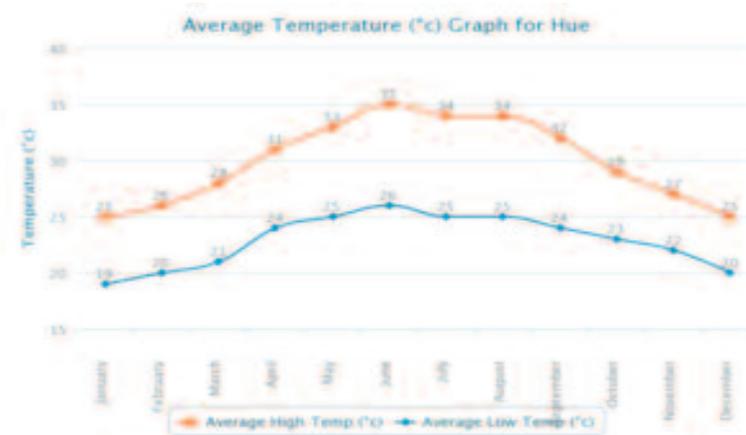
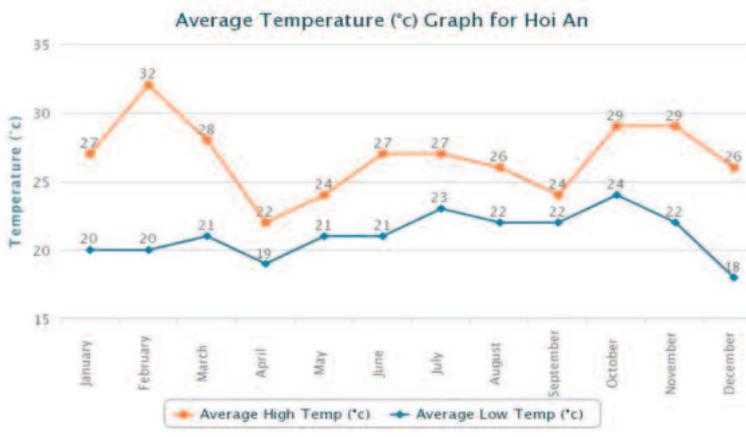
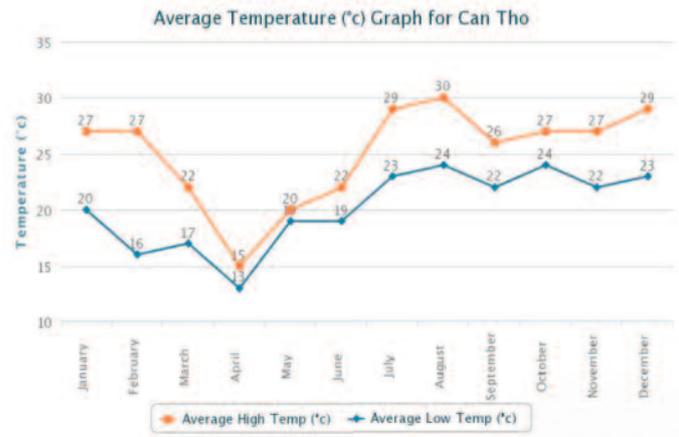
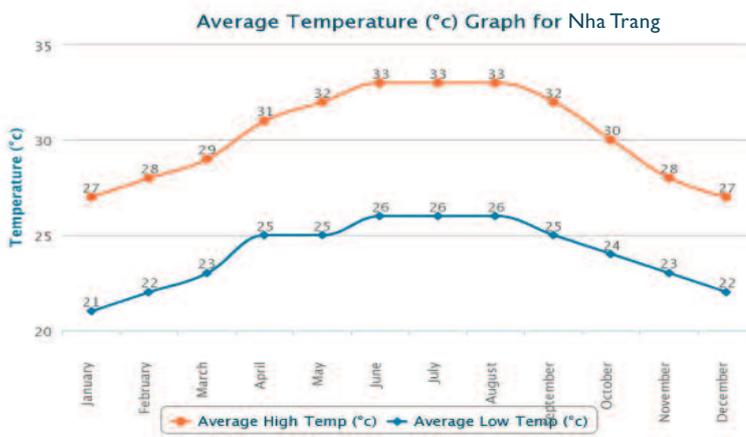
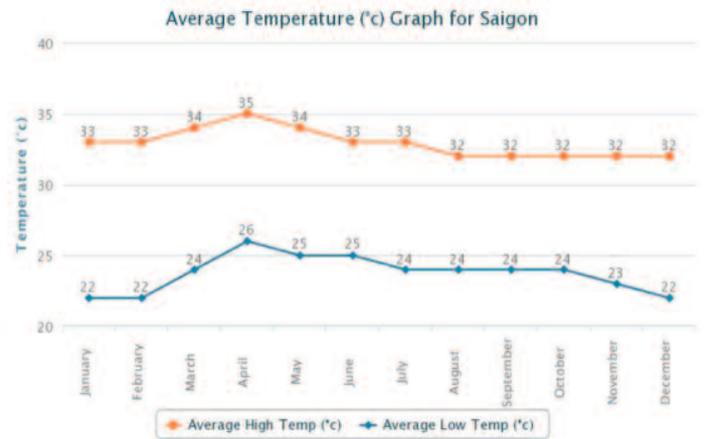
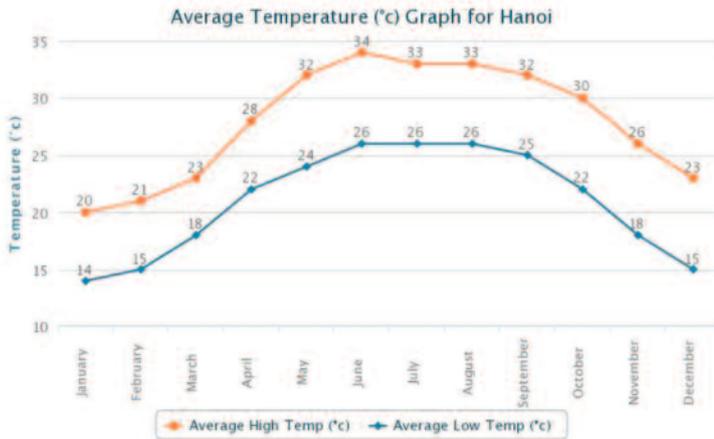
What to Pack

- Sunscreen and hat in summer
- Comfortable walking shoes
- Camera and charger
- An electric plug converter - the electricity in Vietnam/Cambodia is 220-240 V. You will need a 2 round pin plug or 2 flat pin plug adapter
- Loo paper for public WCs
- Binoculars
- A small overnight bag to take on your cruise of Halong Bay



Weather and Climate

Weather can vary quite considerably throughout the year, so please familiarise yourself with the climate charts below.



Halong Bay