



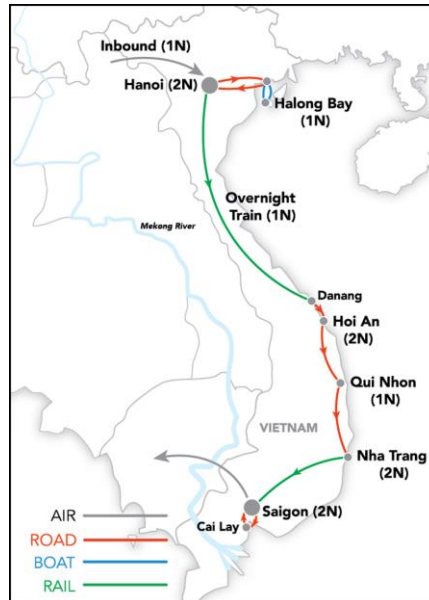
# Vietnam by Rail Private

## Vietnam by Rail Private Tour 13 Days Inclusive from the UK

Take Vietnam's Reunification Express and cycle in the verdant Mekong Delta. This Private Tour explores Halong Bay, sandy beaches and vibrant cities.

### Fully Inclusive price includes:

- International flights and current taxes
- Domestic transportation
- Accommodation
- Meals as stated
- Touring with Guides and entrance fees
- Visa fees for UK passport holders



## Your Tour Dossier

This document is designed to be read in conjunction with the other pre-departure information provided by Wendy Wu Tours including the tour itinerary as described in our brochure and/or website. It aims to provide a straightforward description of the physical activities involved in sightseeing or travelling during the tour.

If there are any particular challenges, from the length of time spent on your feet, the length of drives and flights, to the standard of remote accommodation; they will be explained here.

All passengers must read this document to ensure the itinerary is suitable for their interests and physical capabilities. This is not your final itinerary and therefore does not mention all the sites visited.

## Welcome to Wendy Wu Tours

Vietnam continues to amaze, fascinate and thrill our passengers, many of whom have travelled to one country in Asia with us, then another, year after year. We urge you to keep in mind all the rewards, as well as challenges of travelling in a country with a history, culture and attitude so unlike your own.

A typical day's sightseeing may include the bustle and noise of a city street, sights and smells of a local market and interacting with the locals. Travelling in Vietnam requires patience and potential delays are to be expected due to standards of service. There is a low level of English spoken throughout Vietnam, so your Local Guide will be indispensable during your trip.

Almost everything will be different to what you may be used to. We have found that our passengers who embark with a sense of humour and adventure, who accept that things do not always go to plan, are those who find their experience most rewarding. It is essential that all passengers recognize the demands of factors such as basic facilities and cultural differences they may encounter in some areas.

## Vietnam by Rail Private Tour - Medium Paced Tour

Our private tours are accessible to almost everyone. This tour will involve sightseeing on foot, some climbing of stairs and getting on and off boats throughout the tour.

This tour is not strenuous, and can be taken at the pace, and according to the abilities of passengers travelling in your party. If any member of your party has mobility difficulties, please advise Wendy Wu Tours, so that our operators can be made aware, and may rearrange the itinerary to suit your needs. If at any point during the tour you feel you are being rushed, or not moving fast enough, please let your Local Guide know, so that they may adjust the touring accordingly and provide you with the best experience possible. Similarly, as you are travelling on a private basis, if you would like to change the touring, dates, timings, please speak to your reservations consultant, prior to travelling, or speak to your local guide whilst in Indochina.

NB: Please note that times and distances listed in the tour dossier are approximate.

### Days 1-2: UK/Hanoi

On Day 2, you will be met at Hanoi Airport in the arrivals hall by your Local Guide from Wendy Wu Tours. Then you will transfer (1 hour drive) to your hotel and check-into your room. There is no sightseeing today.

### Day 3: Hanoi

Today you will visit the Ho Chi Minh complex, including Ho Chi Minh's Mausoleum, the Humble House on Stilts, Ho Chi Minh Museum and the One Pillar Pagoda. Later drive to the serene Temple of Literature, and enjoy a walking tour of Hanoi's Old Quarter. This evening take in a performance of the famous Vietnamese Water Puppets. Sightseeing in central Hanoi involves approx. 4hrs on foot.

Both men and women should dress respectfully for the Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum, with covered shoulders and knees. When visiting the Mausoleum please be quiet and show respect. Cameras and mobile phones are not allowed. The Mausoleum is closed from September to December. If you are travelling during this time you will view the Mausoleum from the outside.

*[NB: Your Local Guide will confirm the menu for tomorrow's seafood lunch on board the junk boat, so please mention any food allergies or dislikes again before the end of today.]*

Breakfast, Lunch Included

### Day 4: Hanoi – Halong Bay

Drive 3.5 hours (170km) to Halong City and port, including a 20 minute rest stop. There is usually a crowd of boats at the docks; however the cruise itself will be scenic and relaxing. Spend the night on your boat.

Boarding your junk 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. The junk boats have been modelled on the traditional 'junk' which was both home and working vessel for fishermen for centuries. They usually hold about 20 dining passengers (or 18 maximum overnight), have an enclosed dining area and an open deck on the upper deck.

*[NB: Your Halong Bay cruise may be affected by local weather conditions. Please refer to the 'Itinerary Changes' section]*

Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner Included

### Day 5: Halong Bay - Hanoi

After breakfast this morning, continue some scenic cruising around Halong Bay. Later, travel back to Hanoi (approx. 3.5hr drive) before boarding your overnight Reunification Express Train.

It's advised to have dinner before boarding the train, as most of the food provided on board are small snacks, biscuits and drinks. Onboard you will be provided with a blanket and pillow for your comfort.

Breakfast, Lunch Included

#### **Day 6: Hoi An**

Arrive at Danang station early afternoon, where you will be met and transferred to your hotel in Hoi An. After lunch enjoy a walking tour through the ancient streets of this charming town. Sightseeing in Hoi An involves approx. 2hrs on foot.

Breakfast, Lunch Included

#### **Day 7: Hoi An**

Today you are free to explore Hoi An at your leisure. Take an optional cycling tour through traditional Vietnamese countryside to Cam An Beach (not included in the tour price).

Breakfast Included

#### **Day 8: Hoi An – Qui Nhon**

This morning check out of your hotel in Hoi An, then drive to the My Son Sanctuary, one of the most important examples of Hindu influence in South East Asia. Sightseeing at My Son Sanctuary involves approx. 1.5hrs on foot. After lunch, continue to drive to Qui Nhon and check in to your hotel. Total driving time today is approx. 7hrs.

Breakfast, Lunch Included

#### **Day 9: Qui Nhon – Nha Trang**

After breakfast and checkout, drive along the Vietnam south coast to Nha Trang. Along the way, stop at the Po Nagar Cham Tower, a sacred Hindu site, for approx. 45mins.

Breakfast, Lunch Included

#### **Day 10: Nha Trang Island Cruise**

After breakfast you will be collected from your hotel and transferred to the harbour for your Nha Trang Island Cruise. Explore four islands by boat today, Mieu Island, Mun Island, Mot Island and Con Se Tre Beach. Throughout the day you will stop at the Tri Nguyen Aquarium and Fishing Village, as well as relax, swim and snorkel. Total sightseeing today is approx. 6hrs.

### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Snorkelling equipment is provided, however the cost for certain water sports are not included in the price of your tour and will be paid for locally. Please take care when getting on and off your boat. Lunch will be served at a local restaurant on Bamboo Island.

Breakfast, Lunch Included

#### **Day 11: Nha Trang – Saigon**

After an early breakfast, transfer to Nha Train Railway Station for your early train to Saigon. Sit back and relax whilst enjoying the beautiful countryside into Saigon.

Upon arrival in the early afternoon, take in a short walking tour of the city including Notre Dame Cathedral, Central Post Office and the Ben Thanh Market. Sightseeing involves approx. 2hrs on foot.

Breakfast Box/Picnic Lunch Included

#### **Day 12: Mekong Delta**

Rise early and drive to Cai Lay for your cycle through local villages, rice fields and fruit orchards in the Mekong Delta area. Your cycling tour will take approx. 2hrs. After your cycle, arrive at Cai Be boat station for your private boat cruise (approx. 4hrs) to see traditional floating markets and visit some local home factories. Drive back to Saigon. It is usually quite hot today so please ensure you are wearing enough sun block. Please take care when getting on and off your boat.

Breakfast, Lunch Included

#### **Day 13: Saigon/UK**

Checkout of your hotel, and transfer to the airport for your international flight to the UK. Depending on your chosen airline, you may arrive home later today or tomorrow.

Breakfast, Lunch Included

#### **Land Only**

If you are travelling on a land only basis, then you will need to make your own way to the starting hotel in Hanoi on Day 2. On Day 13, you will checkout from your Saigon hotel, and continue as per your own arrangements.

Please refer to the Wendy Wu Tours brochure and/or website for details on departure dates, prices, itineraries, inclusions and tour extensions available as well as full booking conditions.

## Before You Leave

**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 Vietnam 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. Roads in Vietnam have generally been improved over recent years, but some road construction and/or weather conditions may still 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.

1. Vietnam Airlines' domestic flights are subject to frequent changes. For this reason we have indicated morning, afternoon or evening flights only. Your Local Guide will inform you of any schedule changes as they are informed of them.
2. The Halong Bay Authorities are taking extra precautions to ensure the safety of all passengers cruising around Halong Bay. 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.

**Visas** - A visa is required for entry into Vietnam. A standard visa processing service is included in your tour cost. We will require your passport, completed visa application form, and 1 passport photo, taken within the last 6 months, to process your visa. We will require all this information 8 weeks prior to departure. As per our standard visa processing service, we will have your passport for at least 4 weeks. In rare cases you may be required to provide further information or documentation to the Vietnamese Embassy and/or be required to attend an interview at the embassy in London. If this is the case we will notify you as soon as possible.

**Vaccinations and Your Health** - We recommend that you contact either your local GP or a travel doctor for advice on vaccinations and travel health. [www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk](http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk) is a comprehensive website that you may also find useful.

**Climate** - Please refer to our website or brochure for detailed temperature charts.

**Insurance** - It is a condition of booking with us that you take out suitable travel insurance. You must provide us with the name of your insurer, policy number and their 24 hour emergency contact number when you book with us or as soon as possible thereafter. Wendy Wu Tours 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.

**Luggage** - All clients 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.

## What to Expect on Tour

**Development** - Although Vietnam is developing, it still lacks international standards of civil infrastructure and therefore tourist facilities. For example, you may see a hole in the road without a warning sign or safety barricade; concepts of personal responsibility are different to those in the UK. Consequently, tourist and public facilities may not uphold the same safety standards as in the UK. However, 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 as well as refer to notices and follow advice from your Local Guides.

**Seatbelts** - Please note that seatbelts are not compulsory by law in Vietnam and therefore the Vietnamese people largely choose not to wear them. For this reason some vehicles may not be fitted with seatbelts or they may be hidden underneath protective seat covers. It is recommended that where seatbelts are available customers must use them and remain seated at all times while the vehicle is moving. If you have any concerns, please notify your Local Guide.

Book now on **0844 499 3899** visit [www.wendywutours.co.uk](http://www.wendywutours.co.uk) or see your preferred travel agent.



**Traffic in Vietnam** - Roads in Vietnam have generally been 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 sections above are approximations 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 the UK and Vietnam. 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.

Four and five star hotels are also available on private tours. If you would like to upgrade, please speak to one of our reservation consultants.

**Rail Journeys** - This trip involves one overnight train journey and one day journey. Overnight train journeys are in first-class soft sleeper compartments where each cabin consists of 4 shared berths. We will always endeavour to keep group members together in the same compartment, however there may be times where this is not possible. In this case, you may find yourself sharing with group members of the opposite gender and other travellers. Facilities on board are basic with both Western-style and Asian-style toilets.

**Tipping** - As with most countries, tipping is a way of life in Vietnam. For private tours we recommend an amount of US \$7-10 per person per day for tipping to be distributed amongst drivers, restaurants, guides etc. This amount is at your own discretion.

**Exchanging Cash** - It is highly recommended that extra care and attention is paid when exchanging money when travelling outside major cities in Vietnam. US Dollars are easily exchanged throughout Vietnam, however other currencies such as British Sterling can generally be exchanged in hotels and airports provided notes are new and undamaged. US Dollars should be from the new series from the year 2003 onwards. Old series notes can be difficult to exchange, apart from in some national banks in Vietnam, such as Vietcombank. We suggest for your convenience that you ensure your US Dollars are from the new series to avoid any difficulties exchanging money during your trip. We suggest exchanging your money before travelling to remote areas and smaller towns, as exchange facilities can be limited.

**Meals** - Some meals are included in our private tours, please see inclusions above. If you would like to travel on a fully inclusive meal basis please speak to Wendy Wu Tours, to arrange this prior to travel. Included meals are designed so that you can experience the local dishes, their individual flavours as well as the different ways they are prepared and cooked throughout Vietnam. For meals not included, Local Guides will be happy to assist with recommendations on where and what to eat in order to fully appreciate this vastly different cuisine.

**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 £150 per week should be sufficient; however for those that can't resist a bargain, consider allocating a higher amount.

**Optional Extras** - Our tours are planned to be as fully inclusive as possible. However, from time-to-time your Local Guide may suggest optional tours/sightseeing in addition to the standard sightseeing planned for that city. Such options are at an additional cost, with prices ranging from US\$20-US\$50 per person (payable in local currency). If you do not wish to take part in any optional extras, you will have the option of enjoying some free time at leisure or to return to the hotel.

### **After Your Booking**

Once you have booked with Wendy Wu Tours, you will receive a confirmation invoice followed by deposit documentation, which includes a visa application form, and help sheet. Your final documentation pack will be sent to you approx. 2 weeks prior to departure, and will include a travel wallet, badge, lanyard, suggested packing list and a phrase book, along with your final itinerary and international e-tickets.

Last Updated December 2013

Book now on **0844 499 3899** visit [www.wendywutours.co.uk](http://www.wendywutours.co.uk) or see your preferred travel agent.