



Heart of Indochina Dossier

Deluxe Tour | 19 Days | Physical Level 1

Saigon – Hoi An – Hue – Hanoi – Halong Bay – Luang Prabang – Siem Reap

Packed full of exclusive experiences designed to help you soak up the local cultures, this tour meanders at a relaxed pace through the must-see sights of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, including Halong Bay, Angkor and Luang Prabang, in 5* style.

- Enjoy the deluxe Mekong cruise
- Marvel at the A O show
- Cook local dishes in Hoian
- Dine like a Royal in Hue
- Cruise Halong Bay in style
- Admire Luang Prabang's wats
- Discover Angkor with an archaeology expert



Heart of Indochina inclusions:

- Return international economy flights, taxes and current fuel surcharges (unless land only is selected)
- 5* accommodation throughout
- Meals as stated in the itinerary
- All sightseeing and entrance fees
- All transportation and transfers
- English speaking National Escort (if your group is 10 or more passengers) or Local Guides
- Visa fees for Australian passport holders (please see visa section below for further information on Vietnam and Laos visas)
- 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, customary tipping, early check in or late checkout and other items not specified on the itinerary.

Deluxe Tours:

These tours have been meticulously designed with the more discerning traveller in mind. Our deluxe journeys through Asia feature distinctive and exclusive experiences which bring the region to life. Our deluxe collection tours include:

- Champagne moments
- Unique experiences
- Spa treatment
- Afternoon Tea experience
- Soft drinks included with all meals; Wine/beer included with dinner to enhance customer experience.
- Small group sizes
- Complimentary UK chauffeur transfers available for clients who live within 50 miles of the airport
- Porter service to and from your hotel rooms
- A mid tour laundry service
- Drinks provided during lunch/dinner service

Physical Level 1:

All our tours feature a physical rating to help you select the right holiday for you. To travel on any of our tours requires unaided mobility and the ability to stroll around the sights.

‘Heart of Indochina’ is rated as a **physical level 1** tour. A reasonable level of fitness is required but it’s more about spending time on your feet rather than covering large distances. You’ll be getting on and off coaches, walking around the sights and climbing some steps.

- On several days there will be sightseeing on foot for extended periods of time often on an incline or on uneven surfaces.
- You will be required to get on and off varying sizes of boats often without assistance.

Of course, our National Escort and local guides will always endeavour to provide the highest level of service and assistance; however, they cannot be expected to cater for customers who are unfit to complete the itinerary.

Country Profile: Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia

Vietnam - Vietnam is a country of breath-taking natural beauty with an incredible modern-day history that quickly becomes addictive. It has experienced war and a bloody revolution in the past 100 years, but the revolution now underway is peaceful and prosperous. The speed of the modern-day changes is making Vietnam the absorbing and gripping place that it is today. Vietnam has something to offer everyone, so whether you are a culture vulture, thrill seeker or just looking to relax and take in the beaches, Vietnam will not disappoint.

Laos - Laos has only recently been discovered as a fascinating tourist destination. This delightful jewel is steeped in historical treasures, glorious colonial architecture, lush green jungles and magnificent mountainous terrain. Discover the UNESCO World Heritage listed city of Luang Prabang and the spectacular multi-tiered Kuang Si Waterfalls. Journey by boat along the mighty Mekong River and be amazed by the stunning natural scenery and meet the beautiful, gentle people of Laos. Refreshingly, its long-established ways of life continue; to hurry is simply not the Lao way. This is a truly magical nation.

Cambodia - Cambodia is blessed with unspoilt beaches and beautiful colonial cities like Phnom Penh, Battambang and Kep. In Siem Reap, the breathtaking temples of Angkor are regarded as the heart and soul of Cambodia. Many visitors may never intend to go beyond these magnificent temples; however, they will soon become captivated by other parts of this friendly country.

Joining Your Tour

The tour is 19 days in duration including international flights. Please note that depending on flight schedules passengers may arrive/depart on Day 2.

Travellers booked on 'Land Only', the price includes visa fees and your arrival/ departure airport transfers if arriving/departing on the start and conclusion date of your tour. Please advise your international flight times to reservations. Join the tour on day one in Saigon and end the tour on Day 18 in Siem Reap. Please refer to your final itinerary for more specific meeting instructions pertaining to your departure.

Itinerary Changes

It is our intention 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 local conditions dictate. In these circumstances we will make the best possible arrangements maintaining the integrity of your trip.

Itinerary – Heart of Indochina

Day 1: Saigon

Meals included: Nil

Arrive at the airport by chauffeured transfer and fly overnight to Saigon. On arrival, you will be met and taken to your hotel by your National Escort or Local Guide from Wendy Wu Tours. Together with all other group members who may be arriving at a similar time travel to your hotel for check in.

Please note: 2 soft drinks during lunch; soft drinks/ local wine/ beer during dinner will be provided throughout the tour.



Destination Information

Saigon - The exuberant city of 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 the Pearl of the Orient, which flourished under the American occupation. In more recent times, it was the seat of the South Vietnam government until the events that led to the country's reunification. 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: Saigon

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Today explore Saigon city with its heady mix of local culture and colonial influences. Start at the central Post Office and the Opera house then continue on to Reunification Palace and the chilling War Remnants Museum. Take off on your cyclo tour of fascinating Chinatown arriving at Cha Tam Church and Chua Ong Pagoda, a stunning example of Chinese-inspired architecture. Later head down a traditional herbal medicine street where your tour guide will share with you how locals use their herbal remedies. Continue to head onward to Bitexco Building - a glittering example of modern architecture in the city to enjoy sunset views and a cocktail. Tonight, transfer to the Nha Rong port and step aboard the Bonsai Legacy to wine and dine against the backdrop of Saigon's city lights. This beautiful vessel is a re-creation of a classic river vessel once found all over Indochina and is tastefully updated with modern amenities.



Destination Information

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: Saigon

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Depart from your hotel and drive to the township of Cai Be to board the Cai Be Princess, a traditional riverboat made from native bamboo, wood and rattan. During Vietnam's French colonial period, boats like this were an essential means of transport in a swampy areas and poor roads. On the river, boat traffic is endless and the activity never ceases, observe the local life from the comfort of your sampan as it plays out on the riverbanks, making stops along the way to provide glimpses of local industries: including coconut candy and puffed rice (the local equivalent of popcorn). Your cruise ends at Le Longanier



Restaurant where lunch is served in an exquisite colonial-style villa set in tropical gardens by the river, giving you a sense of life during Indochinese times. After lunch, take a short walk along a small canal, towards the Ba Bon Bridge where you will be picked up and transferred back to your hotel in Saigon. Tonight, enjoy the A O Show, the show is a spectacular showcase of Vietnamese culture and performance art, and combines in beautiful precision elements of both old and new.

Please note: The schedule may be changed based on the times of the AO shows. However, the AO show may not be available on certain dates because of schedule changes. In this case alternative options will be offered instead in other cities visited.

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.

A O Show - Featuring Vietnam's most talented performance artists, traditional musicians and circus-like choreography, A O Show explores the lives of the Vietnamese people through its ensemble creations.

Day 4: Saigon – Hoi An

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

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. Next, it's a short drive through the countryside to visit a cricket farm before transferring to the airport. Fly 1 hour and 15 minutes to Danang and transfer to the charming town of Hoi An.



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.

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 5: Hoi An

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

This morning starts with a cooking class including a market tour, learning about Vietnamese food culture, nutrition, herbal remedies and cooking techniques. Later enjoy a walking tour through the streets of Hoi An, arriving first at Chua Ong Pagoda. Next pass by the 200-year old Tan Ky House and take a short break at the Japanese Covered Bridge - one of Hoi An's most iconic structures. Visit the Reaching Out Teahouse an establishment that aids locals with disabilities, for a rejuvenating cup of tea before having a tasty lunch at a restaurant specializing in traditional Hoi An delicacies.



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.

Day 6: Hoi An - Hue

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Leave Hoi An this morning heading north to Hue. Driving over the scenic Hai Van Pass, passing the fishing village of Lang Co, to enjoy panoramic views of the central coastline. Hue was the imperial capital of Vietnam from 1802-1945, when the last emperor abdicated the throne, yet is still regarded as the seat of Vietnam's culture and religion today. This afternoon take a boat trip along the Perfume River and visit Thien Mu Pagoda.



Destination Information

Hue - Having been the imperial capital from 1802 until 1945 after the last emperor abdicated; Hue is still regarded as the centre of Vietnam's culture and religion. The city is dominated by the Imperial Citadel that is modelled on 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.

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 7: Hue

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Enjoy breakfast at your hotel before exploring Hue's Imperial Citadel. Created in the 19th century, the Imperial City was modelled on the Forbidden City in Beijing and holds many palaces and temples inside its giant walls. Many of the buildings have been damaged by war over the years and are now being restored to their former glory. Transfer to Minh Mang Tomb to explore the opulent and exotic resting place laid out in formal Chinese style. Next, make your way to Thanh Tien Village, well-known for over 300 years of crafting paper flowers. Meet one of the local villagers and learn how to make your own ornate paper flower. Finally, visit Tha Om Garden House and its owner, Mr Vinh. Explore the traditional 19th century Hue residence and listen to Mr Vinh's stories of his royal heritage before returning to your hotel.



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.

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 8: Hue - Hanoi

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Transfer to the airport for your 1 hour and 20-minute flight to Hanoi. On arrival visit Viet Phu Thanh Chuong, a 21-century house with traditional Vietnamese architecture.

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.

Day 9: Hanoi

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

This morning visit Ho Chi Minh Complex for a look at the life of the father of modern Vietnam, passing by Ho Chi Minh's Mausoleum. In the same complex, visit the Humble House on Stilts, the Ho Chi Minh Museum and the One Pillar Pagoda. Drive to the serene Temple of Literature, Hanoi's first university dating back to 1070 and a historical centre of learning, now dedicated to Confucian worship. Later visit the home of a water puppet artist, the descendant of a family of water puppet performers. This Vietnamese traditional performance art has roots dating back to the 10th century. You will have a chance to talk with the artist, watch the process of making the puppets and enjoy a private water puppet show.



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.

Water Puppets - Vietnamese Water Puppets were invented thousands of years ago by farmers in the Red River Delta region near Hanoi, as a means to entertain themselves when the rains flooded their paddy fields. Today puppeteers stand in waist deep water and control the puppets via pole and strings. Most plays focus on folklores and tales of rural life.

Day 10: Hanoi – Halong Bay

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

This morning, drive to the coastal town of Halong, about 4 hours from Hanoi. On arrival in Halong, you will take an overnight cruise to the far-most corners of the bay. Enjoy lunch onboard as you cruise out into the bay, stopping to anchor for an afternoon of activities. End the day on deck watching the sunset over the bay followed by a freshly prepared dinner.



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.

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.

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 11: Halong Bay - Hanoi

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Spend the morning soaking up the scenery; enjoy a hearty breakfast mid-morning before heading back to the harbour and returning to Hanoi. This afternoon, enjoy afternoon tea at La Fée Verte Bar in the Hotel de L'Opera around 3 - 6 pm. A tea set of L'Opera proposes 2 menu options for you to choose: English afternoon tea or Vietnamese high tea menu to discover Hanoi Street vendor tea.



Day 12: Hanoi - Luang Prabang

Meals included: Breakfast

This morning will be free for you to explore independently. This afternoon, transfer to the airport for your 1 hour flight to Luang Prabang. On arrival, check into your hotel for your 3-night stay.



Destination Information

Luang Prabang - The capital of Luang Prabang Province in northern Laos, lies in a valley at the confluence of the Mekong and Nam Khan rivers. It's known for its many Buddhist temples, including the gilded Wat Xieng Thong, dating to the 16th century, and Wat Mai, once the residence of the head of Laotian Buddhism.

Day 13: Luang Prabang

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Rise early this morning to witness the Buddhist ceremony of Takbat, when the monks of Luang Prabang's monastic communities collect alms from locals. These lines of silent saffron robe-clad monks will be an enduring image of your trip. Return to your hotel for breakfast before visiting Phousi Temple for morning views of the city and the morning market where you will see the locals haggling for fresh food. Continue to visit Wat Xieng Thong, one of the largest and most decorative temples. Board your boat and cruise up the tea coloured waters of the Mekong River to the Pak Ou Caves. You will get lunch at the front of the caves, on the way back stop at a riverside village to see weavers working on ancient looms.



Destination Information

Phousi Hill - A 100m high hill in the centre of the old town of Luang Prabang. It lies in the heart of the old town peninsula and is bordered on one side by the Mekong River and on the other side by the Nam Khan River. The hill is a local religious site, and houses several Buddhist shrines. Halfway up the hill, overlooking the Nam Khan is Wat Tham Phou Si, a Buddhist temple. At the summit of the hill, overlooking the town and surrounding countryside, is Wat Chom Si, which is also a Buddhist temple and is a tourist highlight of Luang Prabang.

Wat Xieng Thong - A Buddhist temple (wat), located on the northern tip of the peninsula of Luang Prabang, Laos. Wat Xieng Thong is one of the most important of Lao monasteries and remains a significant monument to the spirit of religion, royalty and traditional art. There are over twenty structures on the grounds including a sim, shrines, pavilions and residences, in addition to its gardens of various flowers, ornamental shrubs and trees.

Pak Ou Caves – Near Pak Ou (mouth of the Ou river) the Tham Ting (lower cave) and the Tham Theung (upper cave) are caves overlooking the Mekong River, 25 km to the north of Luang Prabang, Laos. They are a group of two caves on the west side of the Mekong River, about two hours upstream from the centre of Luang Prabang. The caves are noted for their miniature Buddha sculptures. Hundreds of very small and mostly damaged wooden Buddhist figures are laid out over the wall shelves. They take many different positions, including meditation, teaching, peace, rain, and reclining (nirvana).

Day 14: Luang Prabang

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

This morning, visit the National Museum and stop at Ock Pop Tok Weaving Centre before driving to the cascading turquoise waters of delightful Kuang Si Waterfalls for a picnic lunch. It is possible to take a swim in the river near the falls and if you wish to do this, please remember to bring along your swimsuit and a towel. Changing rooms are available on site. Visit the Sun Bear Reserve a conservation centre that rescues these furry creatures from the wildlife trade before returning to your hotel. Later take part in a Baci Ceremony, an integral part of Laotian culture.

Destination Information

National Museum – Built in 1904 in the French colonial era, the original building was the Royal Palace but was later converted into a museum.

Kuang Si Waterfalls - A three tier waterfall about 29 kilometres south of Luang Prabang. The falls begin in shallow pools atop a steep hillside. These lead to the main fall with a 60 metres cascade. The falls are accessed via a trail to a left of the falls. Water collects in numerous turquoise blue pools as it flows downstream. The many cascades that result are typical of travertine waterfalls. There are walkways and bridges for your enjoyment. Most of the pools are open to swimming.

Day 15: Luang Prabang – Siem Reap

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

This morning will be at leisure before flying 1 and half hours to Siem Reap. Enjoy an evening under the bigtop in downtown Siem Reap with an evening show at Phare, the Cambodian Circus, run by the NGO of the same name which supports the futures of Khmer youth with art and performance training. Later enjoy a spa treatment.

Please note: you will be given a voucher for a treatment at the hotel spa. You have the choice of an aromatherapy body massage or a foot massage, and can book this for whenever you like during your stay here.

Destination Information

Siem Reap - Siem Reap is a bustling tourist destination due to its proximity to both the ancient Khmer national capital city of Angkor as well as Tonle Sap Lake. Angkor Wat is one of the main attractions and is the world's largest religious monument, in addition to being the spiritual and cultural heart of Cambodia. This huge complex of palaces and temples were built on the sprawling alluvial plain to the north of Tonle Sap.

Day 16: Siem Reap

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Go behind-the-scenes in Angkor with one of its lead stone conservation experts working in Angkor for over 25 years. During an exclusive 2.5-hour master class, learn the little-known secrets to how ancient people carved, moved and designed these spectacular religious structures. After a historical primer, get a hands-on crash course in the conservation methods employed by experts like your guide, and continue on your full-day temple tour to explore the complex's best temple relics. Begin at the city of Angkor Thom and the enigmatic Bayon, the Elephant Terrace and the Terrace of the Leper King before continuing to the temple of Ta Prohm, enveloped in a labyrinth of jungle. This afternoon is devoted to the fascinating and awe-inspiring Angkor Wat before enjoying a glass of champagne at Phnom Krom Temple to watch the sunset.



Please note: The Central Tower of the Angkor Wat complex is closed on Buddhist holidays and on all other days has a limited number of visitors allowed at any given time, under regulations from UNESCO. If you wish to visit this tower, you will be required to wait in the queue alongside all other visitors. The ability to do this will be determined upon the groups' schedule.

Destination Information

Ta Prohm - Swallowed by the jungle where Strangler Figs and Kapok Trees have entwined themselves around the ruins. Undoubtedly, the most atmospheric ruin at Angkor with several towers, closed courtyards and narrow corridors to explore.

Angkor Thom - This fortified city is flanked by a row of 54 stone figures on each side, which leads you through a 23-meter imposing stone entrance gate to the various temples inside.

Bayon - Beautifully crafted central towers, decorated with four opposing faces representing King Jayavarman VII. Bayon's stone galleries display extraordinary bas-reliefs incorporating over 11,000 figures.

Elephant Terrace and Terrace of the Leper King -Giant viewing platforms used for public ceremonies, which served as a base for the King's grand audience hall.

Angkor Wat - Surrounded by a 190-meter moat and taking 30 years to build, Angkor Wat represents the Khmer civilisation at its grandest.

Day 17: Siem Reap

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Today experience local life. In the high-water season, you will travel to Kompong Khleang a unique village on stilts and explore the less visited Beng Mealea, a mysterious temple completely overrun by the jungle. In the lower water season, you will visit a local community and Knapor Senior High School library project which empowers education before continuing to the intricate Hindu temples of Banteay Srei and Banteay Samre.

**Destination Information**

Beng Mealea - Dating from the 11th century, this sprawling temple covers over one square kilometre. Largely overrun by vegetation and constructed in a distinctly Angkor Wat-style, Beng Mealea precedes and may even have served as a 'prototype' for Angkor Wat.

Banteay Srei - A Hindu temple dedicated to Shiva and considered by many to be the 'Jewel in the Crown' of Angkorian art. The temple is cut from stone of a pinkish hue and contains some of the finest stone carvings in the world.

Banteay Samre - Built approximately halfway through the 12th century, Banteay Samre is decorated with many intricate and well-preserved carvings of Hindi Mythological stores and Buddhist depictions.

Days 18 - 19: Siem Reap

Meals included: Breakfast

Today transfer to the airport for your flight home, any time before your flight will be at leisure. On arrival at the airport in Australia, be met by your airport chauffeur who will transfer you back home.

Late check-out is not included in our South East Asia group tours. If you wish to book a late check-out for your final day, please contact our reservations department who can confirm additional pricing and make this arrangement for you, subject to availability at the hotel.

Heart of Indochina Travel Information

Visas

Entry visas are required by all visitors to Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia and Wendy Wu Tours Visa Department can assist you with the process of obtaining a visa. We will supply you with all paperwork and submit the visa application on your behalf. Visas for Vietnam are issued with specific start and expiry dates which are based on the dates stated on the visa application form. Travel must be completed within those dates. Visas for Cambodia are valid for 90 days from the date of issue and allow you to stay in the country for up to 30 days. Visas for Laos are valid for 90 days from the date of issue and allow you to stay in the country for up to 30 days. Please be advised that your passport must have at least six months validity left on it when you arrive back into Australia.

Visa application forms and all relevant documentation are due in our office **60 days prior to departure**; if received after this, urgent visa processing fees will apply. Also please note we do not accept passports and visa applications within 30 days prior to departure. Passports will be returned with your Final Documentation **four weeks prior to your group tour's scheduled departure**. If you require your passport to be returned earlier, a \$15AUD courier fee will apply.

Insurance

We strongly 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 originals.

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 most 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.

Your itinerary has been carefully crafted to introduce you to a range of local dishes and we hope that you enjoy the culinary adventure ahead. 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.

Evenings at Leisure

To give you more flexibility and choice when travelling on selected Deluxe tours; we have carefully balanced special highlight meals with evenings at leisure so that you can explore the many culinary delights that Southeast Asia has to offer. Alternatively, you can use this time to enjoy the facilities of your luxurious accommodation. Your National Escort will be happy to provide you with advice about good places to eat, and assist in the booking of transportation to get you there (at your own expense).

Accommodation

As the 'Heart of Indochina' tour is part of our Deluxe Collection, you will be staying in 5* accommodation throughout your tour. We have provided time in your itinerary to have the opportunity to experience the facilities of your accommodation, or relax, allowing you to get the most out of the hotel experience.

Transport

Australian Airport Transfer - Your Deluxe Collection tour includes private chauffeur-driven transfers from Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth, Adelaide, Canberra and Cairns based on executive sedan or similar. Available within a radius of 60 driven kilometres from the nearest international airport. After hours surcharges apply between 12:00am-6:00am. Please contact reservations for further information.

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 South East Asia 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.

Seatbelts: Please note that seatbelts are not compulsory by law in South East Asia and therefore the local 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 National Escort/Local Guides.

Air: Internal flights are based on economy class, with reputable airlines. Pre-flight seat allocation is not available on international and internal flight sectors.

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.

Vietnam, Laos & Cambodia 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. Tet Holiday is between 15th and the 20th February 2018, 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.

In Laos: International Women's Day is 8th March, Laos New Year Holiday is 13th – 17th April.

In Cambodia: Khmer New Year is 13th – 17th April every year, the King's birthday is 14th - 16th May and the Water festival is between 21st – 23rd November.

Souvenirs

We want to be able to give you an opportunity to buy souvenirs so we include some stops at museums or exhibitions which demonstrates 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.

Most of our groups consist of 10 travellers or more and will be accompanied by a National Escort. There will

Group Size

usually be no more than 18 travellers in each group although you may encounter other Wendy Wu tour groups while you are travelling. The minimum age of customers on this tour is 18 years old.

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, instead of a National Escort.

Tipping Policy

Local tipping is customary in Asia. However, this can often lead to awkwardness in knowing when it is appropriate to tip and how much, as well as ensuring you have a suitable amount of change available at the time. For your convenience, with years of experiences in providing the best customer service, Wendy Wu Tours operates a kitty system on our Group Tours so your National Escort will look after this aspect of your trip for you. It also ensures that the amounts paid are reasonable for you but still fair for the local people. The amount is stated on each Group Tour page will be advised again on your final documentation. Tipping is in US Dollars and will be collected by your National Escort on arrival and distributed throughout the tour on your behalf. Any additional tipping on any of our tours is welcomed at your discretion. Further guidance for tipping contributions will be outlined in your final documentation.

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.

Packing list and Climate

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

You will find a complete packing list and a helpful climate chart in the 'Suggested Packing List', which will be included in the pre-departure information link sent within your deposit documentation. Seasonal weather patterns can be quite unpredictable. Up to the minute information on worldwide weather can be found on www.weather.com

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 five kilograms. It is essential that your luggage is lockable.

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, Laos and Cambodia, however

other currencies such as Australian Dollars 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. Your National Escort will remind you to do this before departure.

Personal Expenses & Optional Tours

Personal Expense - 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 \$450AUD 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.

Optional tours may be offered in each city you visit during your tour at an additional cost. These are not included in the standard itinerary and will only be available if time permits. Each option will be arranged locally by your National Escort/Local Guide.

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.

Cultural Difference

Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia have many religions, cultures and histories. Please be considerate of the local beliefs and customs and dress with consideration.

Appropriate Dress

When visiting temples or mosques, both men and women should dress in conservative, non-revealing clothing. Full-length trousers with a shirt or t-shirt for men; and pants or skirts well below the knee with a top that covers the shoulders and upper arms for women. Women might also consider carrying a 'modesty shawl' in their daypack – this could be a sarong or light scarf – which they can wear over their shoulders and heads to feel more comfortable while sightseeing at mosques.

Religious sites and homes throughout South East Asia – for Hindus, Muslims or Buddhists to name a few – require all visitors to remove their shoes to enter. Even if you then need to walk outdoors, over hot or rough ground, you will not be allowed to wear shoes. You will often find shoe storage rooms near the entrance of a site where it is customary to leave your shoes near the entrance. Occasionally there are 'shoe minders' who will offer to keep your shoes safe for a 'tip' – this is not compulsory, so each customer can choose to tip for this service or not. If you do not want to remove your shoes, you will have to remain outside.

We recommend shoes that easily slip on and off and carry a pair of thick socks in your daypack, which you can wear to protect your feet from any rough or hot surfaces. The following itinerary will indicate when you need to consider this.

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.smartraveller.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 followed by deposit documentation, which includes 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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