

Explore



Child Ages: 7+

## Family Vietnam In Depth

Vietnam | Family | Trip code FVN

477Kg of CO<sub>2</sub>e  
Average carbon footprint per person

**feefo**    
Product Rating 12 reviews

Days **15**

Deposit from  
**US\$258**

Price from  
**US\$2580**

## View dates & book

Join us on an in depth journey through magical Vietnam, traversing the country from north to south. Bike alongside the rice paddy fields of Mai Chau and explore the intricate network of waterways in the Mekong Delta. Witness the hustle and bustle of Ho Chi Minh City, the old-world charm of Hanoi, ancient neighbourhoods of Hoi An and dramatic limestone pinnacles of Halong Bay.

### Why we love this trip

- **Mai Chau** - Cycle along rice terraces and through villages dotted with stilt houses.
- **Ho Chi Minh City** - Learn about the resourcefulness of the Viet Cong at the Cu Chi Tunnels, visit an underground weapons bunker and explore old Saigon's bustling back alleys.
- **Mekong Delta** - Navigate the delta by bike and boat. Stay in a traditional homestay and take part in a Vietnamese cooking lesson.

INCLUDED MEALS	TRIP STAFF	TRANSPORT	ACCOMMODATION	TRIP PACE:	GROUP SIZE:
Breakfast: 13 Lunch: 5 Dinner: 4	Explore Tour Leader Driver(s)	Bicycle Boat Minibus On Foot Rickshaw Train Tuk Tuk	1 nights comfortable guesthouse 9 nights comfortable hotel 2 nights premium hotel 1 nights comfortable junk 1 nights simple overnight train	Full on	14 - 20

## Itinerary

Itineraries on some departure dates may differ, please select the itinerary that you wish to explore.

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## DAY 1 - Join trip in Hanoi.

Arrive in Vietnam's capital, Hanoi, which is famous for its rich culture, bustling life, and colonial influences. Its small lakes, busy streets and secluded alleyways are all waiting to be explored.

For those arriving on time, our tour leader plans to meet you in the hotel reception at 6pm for the welcome meeting and for those that wish, there is the chance to go out for dinner. There are no other activities planned today, so you're free to arrive in Hanoi at any time. If you'd like an airport transfer, you'll need to arrive into Noi Bai International Airport (HAN), which is a one-hour drive to the hotel.

If you miss the welcome meeting, our tour leader will leave a note at the hotel reception to inform you of any essential information.

If your flight arrives earlier in the day, you might like to head to the Old Quarter and explore the maze of narrow lanes that are named after the various crafts of Hanoi's artisans. The pavements around here are filled with food sellers tempting you with steaming noodles, snacks and stir-fried delights, too.



### ACCOMMODATION:

Luxe Paradise Premium Hotel (or similar)



**Grade: Comfortable Hotel**



MEALS PROVIDED: NONE

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## DAY 2 - Hanoi. Watch locals take lakeside yoga classes, explore night markets.

This morning, our tour leader will lead us on a sightseeing tour of Hanoi, visiting the One-Pillar Pagoda, the Temple of Literatures and the Mausoleum of Ho Chi Minh. The afternoon is then free to take an optional cookery class or explore Hanoi's elegant French Quarter on foot.

The afternoon is then free to perhaps take an optional cookery class, or explore Hanoi's elegant French Quarter by cyclo. In the evening there is the chance to witness a remarkable performance of traditional water puppetry (optional activity). Set on a flooded stage, the stories tell tales of legendary heroes and everyday life, with dragons and unicorns often sharing the stage with fireworks and naval battles, alternatively head out to sample the delights of Vietnamese cuisine at a local restaurant including regional specialities such as Goi cuon (spring rolls) or Pho, Vietnam's national dish, a light beef or chicken broth flavoured with ginger and coriander, to which are added broad, flat rice noodles, spring onions and slivers of chicken, pork or beef.



### ACCOMMODATION:

Luxe Paradise Premium Hotel (or similar)



**Grade: Comfortable Hotel**



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

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### **DAY 3 - Scenic drive to Mai Chau, bike through paddy fields past tranquil traditional villages.**

Hemmed in by hills and set in a tranquil valley, Mai Chau is a world away from the hectic pace of life of Hanoi. The four hour journey provides a glimpse of rural life in the north of the country passing through villages surrounded by paddy fields. On arrival, check-in to our hotel with fine views of local villages distantly related to the tribes in Thailand, Laos and China, lunch is included at the hotel.

This afternoon head out on a biking tour along rice terraces of the Mai Chau Valley dotted with stilt houses. The ride provides opportunities for panoramic views of paddy fields, spectacular karst cliffs and verdant valleys around you, a truly spectacular setting. On the way home, pass by Van Village, home to the White Thai people. Enjoy dinner and an overnight stay at our comfortable eco lodge featuring a swimming pool to cool off in after an afternoon of cycling.



ACCOMMODATION:  
Mai Chau Ecolodge (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

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### **DAY 4 - Drive to Xam Khoe Village, home to Thai ethnic minority, home cooked lunch with a local family.**

After breakfast, drive to Xam Khoe Village and set off on a walking tour to Buoc Village populated by the Thai ethnic minority people, the terrain is mainly flat, sticking to the valley floor traversing the network of banks separating rice paddy fields. Enjoy local hospitality in a simple stilt-house and a home-cooked lunch prepared by our host family. Take a short drive back to Mai Chau with a stop en route to explore the magnificent Van Mai Valley.



ACCOMMODATION:  
Mai Chau Ecolodge (or similar)

## Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

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### **DAY 5 - Continue to Ninh Binh, likened to an inland Halong Bay.**

This morning is left free to enjoy a leisurely breakfast. Drive to Ninh Binh in the afternoon. Whilst the town itself is fairly unremarkable, the area around Ninh Binh is beautiful, known for its impressive cave formations and network of waterways, lakes, temples and towering limestone peaks.



ACCOMMODATION:  
Ninh Binh Hidden Charm Hotel (or similar)

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### Grade: Premium Hotel



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

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### **DAY 6 - Bike ride through paddy fields to visit Dong Tam Village. Afternoon boat trip to explore cave complex.**

This morning, we stretch our legs as we cycle the back roads through picturesque local communities to Dong Tam village. After a break at a temple, we head through the countryside towards the spectacular limestone peaks of Van Long, surrounded by paddy fields and meandering waterways. The landscape is truly spectacular. Our destination is the nearby village of Vuon Thi, where we enjoy a delicious traditional lunch prepared by friendly hill tribe villagers.

After lunch, take a sampan ride along the charming Ngo Dong River to a cave complex, with time to explore the network of caves in the area. Return to Ninh Binh.



ACCOMMODATION:  
Ninh Binh Hidden Charm Hotel (or similar)

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## Grade: Premium Hotel



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST & LUNCH

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### **DAY 7 - Morning drive to Ha Long Bay. Overnight cruise on a traditional junk boat, visit fishing village, sea kayaking.**

Leaving Ninh Binh after breakfast, we'll hop on our bus and take the new expressway to the Gulf of Tonkin and the breathtaking scenery of Ha Long Bay (a journey of around two and a half hours).

A UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of the most visually impressive landscapes in Southeast Asia, Halong Bay is a bucket-list icon. We'll make the most of the scenery with an overnight cruise, boarding our boat just after midday and setting sail towards Bai Tu Long Bay. Lunch is included today (as is dinner) and will be served shortly after we embark - we have time at leisure, so sit back and admire the towering limestone islands topped by rainforest that Halong Bay is so famous for.

We'll make a stop to visit a Vung Vieng fishing village by rowing boat or kayak, the choice is yours. The rest of the afternoon is spent further exploring the bay scattered with hundreds of islands and dotted with caves and grottoes. Again, dinner will be served on board and we'll have the chance to sample fresh seafood and regional dishes. We'll anchor overnight in Bai Tu Long Bay.

Our overnight junk boat is graded as comfortable. There are between 10-18 en-suite cabins on board with a restaurant, bar and sundeck area. All bedding and towels are provided. Please be aware, the boat isn't exclusive to our group and we might be sharing with other tourists.



ACCOMMODATION:  
Overnight Junk in Halong Bay (or similar)

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## Grade: Comfortable Junk



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

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### **DAY 8 - Witness sunrise over Halong Bay. Visit Thien Canh Son caves. Return to Hanoi to take the Reunification Express overnight train to Hue.**

If you want to catch the sunrise over the bay this morning, you'll need to be on deck for 6:30am - it's well worth the early start though if the weather is clear. We'll have a light breakfast of pastries, tea and coffee before we disembark to visit the hidden Thien Canh Son caves, where we can see numerous stalactite and

stalagmite limestone formations in an impressive cavern. Returning to our boat, we'll continue our cruise in the bay and enjoy a brunch served onboard.

Returning to Hon Gai harbour, we'll rejoin our vehicle and drive back to Hanoi and the rest of the afternoon is free. If you'd like to freshen up before we catch the Reunification Express sleeper train to Hue, there will be two day-use hotel rooms available for our group.

Tonight, we'll travel in soft sleeper compartments, with four passengers sharing each compartment. All bedding is provided. Please note, breakfast will not be included on the train, it's advisable to pick up snacks for the morning before we board the train.



ACCOMMODATION:  
Overnight train from Hanoi to Hue



Grade: Simple Overnight Train



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

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### **DAY 9 - Travel to the Tu Duc Royal Tombs. Try kite making (and flying!) and visit the Imperial Palace.**

Arriving in Hue this morning, we head out to see some of the highlights of this historic city including a visit to the Royal Palace with its Terracotta Warriors guarding the entrance and the iconic Thien Mu Pagoda, home to the oldest monastery in the city. We'll also visit the house of a national champion kite flier for Vietnam where we'll learn how to make traditional Vietnamese kites. We'll then take our completed kites to the nearby Citadel grounds, home to the Imperial City, to try them out.



ACCOMMODATION:  
Thanh Lich 2 Hotel (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: NONE

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## **DAY 10 - Hoi An. Martial arts lesson. Make traditional wood paintings, cruise on the Perfume River.**

We have a packed day ahead of us today as we travel to Trieu Son village, located by the Perfume River.

Our first stop is Sinh village for a masterclass in making traditional wood paintings. We'll then take a leisurely cycle ride along the local countryside lanes to Thanh Tien village, which is famous for paper flowers. Continuing through paddy fields and the countryside, we'll arrive at Tien Non village where we board our cruise boat back to Hue (total cycling distance is approximately 6 kilometres/3.7 miles).

Next, we'll visit a martial arts school that practices the Vietnamese art of Kinh Van for a martial arts demonstration. The school's owner's ancestors were chosen to guard the Vietnamese king and he now teaches this ancient art.

Finally, we'll travel over the Truong Son Mountains and through the Hai Van Pass to the historic merchant seaside town of Hoi An.



**ACCOMMODATION:**  
Vinh Hung Old Town Hotel (or similar)

**Grade: Comfortable Hotel**



**SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE**



**MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST**

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## **DAY 11 - Free day in Hoi An, opportunity to spend the day on the beach.**

The morning is free to wander through the historic heart of this UNESCO World Heritage Site, taking in the wonderfully preserved buildings of what was once one of the busiest trading outposts in Southeast Asia.

We recommend an early morning visit to Hoi An's fish market - the perfect setting for snapping some colourful photographs and interacting with the locals. You might also like to visit the city's famous Japanese Bridge, before wandering through the traditional wooden houses and Chinese temples. This afternoon, you could hire bicycles and explore the surrounding countryside, take a gentle river cruise, spend time at the beach, or take the chance to visit some of Hoi An's famous tailor shops. Alternatively, you could take a 20 minute taxi ride to the nearby coast to spend the day on the beach.



**ACCOMMODATION:**  
Vinh Hung Old Town Hotel (or similar)

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## Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

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### **DAY 12 - Fly to Ho Chi Minh City. Explore the old quarter in cyclos (cycle carriages with a seat).**

This morning, we set off towards Danang. Our journey takes us past the five peaks of the Marble Mountains, originally believed to have been islands that were said to represent the five elements of water, wood, fire, gold and earth. On arrival in Danang, we'll board the morning flight to Ho Chi Minh City.

Landing in Ho Chi Minh City (formerly Saigon), we'll head out to explore District 3 by cyclo (cycle carriages with a seat at the front). We'll turn off the main thoroughfare and into the maze of narrow streets of this bustling district on foot. Our walk takes us past ramshackle shopfronts, through local markets selling anything from colourful fruit to bootleg DVDs, and past houses, churches and schools, all squeezed into the small buildings that line the narrow alleys. Finally, we'll stop at a local stall for a traditional Vietnamese coffee (brewed coffee served sweet with condensed milk) where we can also sample 'Banh Mi' - a Vietnamese take on the humble French baguette - freshly baked and packed with a combo of traditional and more exotic ingredients.

Our walk winds up at the so-called 'secret weapons' bunker'. A small unassuming 'tube house' with a trap door in the floor that hides a basement stocked full of rifles, grenades and ammunition. The bunker played a key role in the TET Offensive of 1968, it was the base from which the Viet Cong's "Team 5" launched their assault, and its location was only revealed after the end of the war. We'll have some time to explore the house and bunker, filled with decommissioned weapons and photographs, news clippings and memorabilia from the wartime.



ACCOMMODATION:  
Huong Sen Hotel (or similar)

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## Grade: Comfortable Hotel



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

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### **DAY 13 - Discover the Cu Chi Tunnels which the Viet Cong used as a hideout during the Vietnam War.**

After breakfast this morning, we'll head out to visit the infamous Cu Chi tunnels. First constructed by the Vietnamese during their colonial war with the French, the tunnels served as an underground command base for 10,000 Viet Cong troops during the Vietnam War.

The afternoon is free for you to explore more at your own pace.



**ACCOMMODATION:**

Huong Sen Hotel (or similar)



**Grade: Comfortable Hotel**



**MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST**

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**DAY 14 - Drive to the Mekong Delta, overnight homestay, explore villages by bike.**

Leaving the city behind us this morning, we'll drive to the Mekong Delta and catch a boat to the start point of our cycle ride. We'll cycle for around 10-12 kilometres/6-7 miles along the flat Cai Thai village path with views of the delta as we wind our way around its tributaries. The route is often shaded which is helpful to combat the humidity (the boat can pick up cyclists at various stopping points if required). Along the way, we'll visit Mrs Nani's home who will show us how to make rice paper in the traditional way and Mr and Mrs Chin's home who will treat us to refreshments that include her famous 'Banh Tieu' (traditional doughnut).

We'll return to the boat where we'll have lunch onboard and sail close to our night stop. Transferring from our cruise boat to a sampan craft, which is a small traditional boat that is regularly used by the villagers to travel along the delta, we'll complete our journey to our homestay close by.

Our homestay is set in a lovely garden with a main lounge area and dining room. Accommodation is en-suite (shower and toilet) with traditional décor throughout. After settling in, we'll have a Vietnamese cooking lesson in the early evening followed by a delicious homecooked meal. Our hosts might even treat us to some traditional dancing and singing.



**ACCOMMODATION:**

Ut Trinh & Ut Quynh Homestay (or similar)



**Grade: Comfortable Guesthouse**



**MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER**

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## **DAY 15 - Morning cruise on the Mekong Delta. Drive back to Ho Chi Minh City where the trip ends.**

Leaving the homestay behind, we'll cruise back along the Mekong Delta passing small floating markets and soaking up the atmosphere of this unique trading point, a vast network of rivers and islands that crisscross agricultural villages, paddy fields and mangrove swamps. Bidding farewell to our boat crew, we'll then drive back to Ho Chi Minh City.

We'll aim to be back in Ho Chi Minh City around 3pm. For those with evening flights, a day-use room will be available. If you'd like an airport transfer today, you'll need to depart from Saigon's Tan Son Nhat International Airport (SGN). The earliest your flight can depart is 5pm.

Why not extend your trip to Indochina with three nights on the tropical white sand beaches of Phu Quoc Island? Nestled in the warm waters of the Gulf of Thailand this Vietnamese island is 90% national park, a thick-rainforest interior framed by idyllic white sand beaches. Easily accessible by a short flight from Hanoi, Siem Reap or Ho Chi Minh City, this is a great way to unwind after an action-packed trip in Indochina.



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

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## **Is this the tour for you?**

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- We've graded our family tour of Vietnam as moderate and we'll be moving at a fast pace to fit in the highlights. Expect a packed itinerary balanced with some free time to relax or explore.
- As well as a busy itinerary, this tour has lots of optional activities. If you choose to take part in these, be prepared for some full - on days.
- We cover a lot of ground and there'll be some long drives - these are a great chance to soak up some of Vietnam's scenery.
- Our itinerary also includes a simple overnight train. Facilities are basic and we recommend boarding prepared with snacks.
- Vietnam has three climatic zones with different seasons so you should be prepared for hot and humid as well as cooler conditions. The sun is always strong and there is always the chance of rain so pack for all weather.
- Food is a highlight of any trip to Vietnam, and we'll have plenty of opportunities to sample the delicacies, from street stalls to local restaurants. While you'll find international restaurants in the bigger cities, you might want to stock up on snacks if you're travelling with a picky eater.

## **How about adding a four day trip to one of Vietnam's beautiful islands?**

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# Trip information

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## Climate and country information

### Vietnam

#### Climate

As Vietnam is a long, narrow country from north to south climate conditions vary considerably. The climate can be divided into three distinct patterns between the north, central and south regions. The climate in the north is generally humid and subtropical, although the winter months from November to March can be colder with temperatures from 10 - 15 degrees. Summer months, May to September can be quite hot with temperatures from 30 - 35 degrees. Meanwhile south Vietnam enjoys a tropical climate all year round, with little variation throughout the year (around 27 - 32 degrees), however May to November is the rainy season when short, heavy downpours are quite frequent. Central Vietnam lies somewhere in between. The coastal strip is usually dry and hotter from April to October while November to March is wetter and cooler. A light rain jacket and small umbrella are recommended year round.

#### Time difference to GMT

+7

#### Plugs

2 Pin Round

#### Religion

Mahayana Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism

#### Language

Vietnamese

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## Budgeting and packing

### Optional activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations. Please note: These activities are booked and paid for locally and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

A selection of optional activities are listed below to help you budget for your Family adventure. Whilst the basic tour price you pay before you travel includes a great selection of highlights, we have also built in free time to allow you the flexibility to choose from a carefully selected range of additional excursions and activities or take time to relax, the choice is yours. At certain destinations along the way there may be several options to choose from and it may not be possible to fit all the activities in; your Explore Leader will be able to give advice on which are the most suitable for your family.

### Day 1 or 2: Hanoi

Discover a unique part of Vietnamese culture at the Thang Ling water puppet theatre. Duration: Approx. 1 hour. USD \$7 per person; Cycle tour of the Old Quarter USD\$ 10

### Day 9: Hue

Dong Ba market is the oldest trading venue in Hue spanning almost 16,000 square meters on the northern bank of the Perfume River. Be sure to visit the food court on the ground floor to sample authentic Vietnamese dishes such as pho, banh khoai (stuffed omelette), and fresh spring rolls. Guided tour USD \$18 per person.

### Day 11: Hoi An

Taking part in a cookery lesson is a great way for the whole family to get involved in learning about the complex flavours that makes Vietnamese food so delicious. Choose from a morning or afternoon cookery class. USD \$ 39 to USD \$45 per person; Half day cycle through the countryside USD\$ 22

### Day 13 or 15: Ho Chi Minh City

Visit the Reunification palace USD \$2 per person.

## Clothing

Pack essentially for hot weather although December through to February warmer clothing is needed for the North. Bear in mind that the region is tropical (humid) and can be hot. Lightweight rainwear is advisable at all times. The north is cold at night during the winter.

Casual clothes are the most practical, although bear in mind that when visiting temples you will need shorts or skirts that cover below the knees.

## Footwear

Comfortable walking shoes and sandals.

## Luggage

20kg

## Luggage: On tour

One main piece of baggage and daypack. Remember you are expected to carry your own luggage so don't overload yourself.

## Equipment

Binoculars for wildlife viewing, torch, water bottle, insect repellent, high factor suncream, good quality sunglasses and a lip salve with sun protection. An overnight bag and swimming gear and towel is also recommended.

It is compulsory to wear a helmet when cycling on an Explore holiday. Cycling helmets will be provided locally by a reputable supplier, however we strongly recommend that if you plan to take part in the included bike ride on this tour, you bring your own cycling helmet with you as we cannot guarantee the

quality or structural integrity of local equipment. Most insurance providers require helmets to be worn whilst cycling, so in the event of an accident, it is likely that any insurance claim will be invalidated if you are not wearing a helmet.

## Tipping

### Explore leader

Tipping isn't compulsory, and we work hard to ensure that our leaders all receive a fair wage. You may however, want to recognise a leader that's done a great job or really added to your trip by giving them a tip. We're often asked about the recommended amount. It's a tricky one, and down to personal preference, but we'd recommend between £15 to £20 per person per week as a guideline.

### Local crew

In this region, tipping is a recognised part of life across the service industry. Local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided.

To assist with this your Explore Leader may organise a group tips kitty for included activities and meals, they will then account for kitty use throughout the tour.

For this we suggest \$35 per family member.

For all non-included services and meals on your trip please tip independently at your discretion.

## Vietnam

### Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Dinner price	Beer price	Water price
£9	£2.00 - 4.00	£0.5

### Foreign Exchange

#### Local currency

Dong.

#### Recommended Currency For Exchange

Carry your money in US\$ Dollars cash. You can also take GBP but US\$ are easier to exchange. (Dollar bills can be used in some hotels and shops; change is often given in local currency).

#### Where To Exchange

Most towns.

#### ATM Availability

There are ATMs virtually everywhere in Vietnam and in Cambodia, though we also recommend bringing cash.

#### Credit Card Acceptance

Credit card's are widely accepted throughout Vietnam

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## **Transport, Accommodation, Food & Drink**

### **Transport Information**

Bicycle, Boat, Minibus, On Foot, Rickshaw, Train, Tuk Tuk

### **Accommodation notes**

During our tour of Vietnam, we stay in predominantly comfortable-grade accommodation, with one night in a simple homestay and one night on a simple sleeper train. Accommodation has been chosen based on location and authenticity, to bring us closer to local life in our destination.

In general, comfortable-grade accommodation is three-star with good facilities such as en-suite bathrooms, air conditioning and WiFi. Most hotels will have added amenities such as a restaurant or bar, or a swimming pool. See your final documentation for a list of confirmed hotels for your departure.

While in Halong Bay, we stay aboard a junk boat. Rooms are en-suite and spacious and there is a restaurant and sundeck onboard. All meals are included during our cruise.

We spend one night on the Reunification Express sleeper train from Hanoi to Hue. The overnight train is simple and we stay in lockable, four-berth cabins with toilets at the end of the corridor. Please note, breakfast is not served onboard so we recommend buying snacks before departure.

## **Vietnam**

### **Food and drink**

#### **Can you drink the water?**

The water quality is poor and therefore it is recommended to avoid drinking tap water during your trip.

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## **Essential Information**

### **Government Travel Safety Advice**

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination's safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. Relevant government website links for UK, US, Canadian, Australian and New Zealand citizens are available on our Travel Safety page.

If you'd like some initial information on country-specific entry requirements, such as visas or any health declaration forms, please refer to our Entry Requirements page. The services and information on this page are provided by a third party, and so we will still recommend that you cross check this against your government website for the latest advice.

#### **Under 18 immigration guidance**

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

## Price Guarantee

Once your booking has been confirmed we guarantee the price will not increase, whatever the circumstances. However, please note that if you voluntarily make any changes to your booking including changing your trip or departure date, any additional costs or charges incurred will not be covered. Before booking please ensure you have read our important tour pricing information. Booking Conditions

## Visa and Passport Information

British passport holders can visit Vietnam for up to 45 days without a visa. A visa will be required if you wish to re-enter within 30 days of your departure.

Visas are required for any other nationalities including the Republic of Ireland, USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand and can be obtained in the form of an eVisas via: <https://evisa.gov.vn>

We strongly recommend applying for the online visa at least 6 weeks before departure, making sure all the information entered is exactly as per your passport. You won't be able to enter Vietnam without a valid visa if you do not hold a British Passport.

All visa related issues including information for other nationalities should be confirmed with the relevant Embassy prior to departure.

Please note that it is a pre-requisite for entry into Vietnam that your passport is valid for a minimum of 6 months from your date of entry.

For customers visiting the EU, or transiting via EU countries, please be aware that the European Union's (EU) new Entry/Exit System (EES) is being rolled out, with full operation from 10 April 2026. This means that when you travel into, or depart from, the Schengen area for short stays, you will need to register your biometric details, such as fingerprints and a photo. You do not need to take any action before you arrive at the border, and there is no cost for EES registration. On your first entry or exit into a Schengen country, you will be asked to register your details at a special booth before proceeding to the immigration desk.

At some ports and international stations allow for extra time as there may be increased wait times while EES registration is completed before passengers leave the UK and transit through a EU country. Once initial registration has been completed future entering or exiting of an EU Schengen country should be simplified as only a single fingerprint scan or facial recognition scan will be required.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may be able to apply through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See [www.travcour.com](http://www.travcour.com) to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, with the correct validity for your chosen destination.

## Booking conditions

Before booking your Explore trip, please ensure that you read both our Essential Information and Booking Conditions.

### **Minimum age restrictions**

For our group tours, the minimum age is **16**. The minimum age on Family trips varies between 7 and 11 - please check the 'Family information' section of the trip page for more information.

### **Your safety and enjoyment on tour**

We want everyone to have a safe and enjoyable holiday, so we ask you to confirm when booking this trip that you are fit and able to fully participate in all elements of the itinerary. If you have any concerns about your fitness or ability to complete any of the activities, please get in touch with our Customer Relations team at [cr@explore.co.uk](mailto:cr@explore.co.uk) as soon as possible. Our tour leaders are trained and experienced in managing differing abilities within a group, but if they have concerns about a group member's ability to safely participate in any element of the itinerary or believe someone's presence could affect the safety or enjoyment of the holiday for others, in accordance with our Booking Conditions our tour leaders have the authority to ask an individual to miss an activity or activities. This decision would never be taken lightly, but on the rare occasions our tour leaders ask someone to sit out part of the tour, refunds will not be offered and individuals may be liable for additional costs incurred.

## **Your Tour Leader**

All tours aside from extensions, Galapagos cruises and polar expeditions will be led by one of our experienced Tour Leaders. We believe that our Tour Leaders are the key to the success of our tours; they are local experts who are bursting with first-hand knowledge which they love to share, and their unique insights will bring the destination to life. Your Tour Leader will be on hand throughout your tour to make sure arrangements run smoothly, to organise all the local logistics and to keep you safe. Your Tour Leader should be your first point of contact if you encounter any difficulties or disappointments in country - please raise any concerns, however small, with your Tour Leader as they are best placed to assist you.

## **Transfers**

Find out more about [Trip Transfer Terms and Conditions](#) before you book.

### **Booking a land only package with Explore**

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found below in the dates and prices information.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer.

### **Joining Tour Abroad**

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The complimentary transfers will be arranged from the Explore designated airport or train station to your trips joining point, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. Generally the airport or station that Explore have selected will be the one that is closest to the town or city where the trip starts, or the one nearest to the joining point. It will be either an airport or train station but not both.

The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Polar customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer [click here](#)

## **Insurance**

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. The cost of many of our Polar Voyages will exceed the capped amount covered by standard insurance premiums and you will be required to pay an additional premium to cover the full value of your trip. Please ensure that you are covered for the full amount of your holiday cost, as insufficient cover could invalidate a claim under the policy. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

Read more information about what travel insurance is required.

## **Flight information**

Explore can arrange your flights for you, to make joining and leaving our trips easy. Read more about them [here](#).

### **Flight Information**

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

### **Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore**

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display the price of the tour only. Please call us or select the flight option during the online checkout to receive a quote for a flight inclusive package. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

## **Ability to swim**

An ability to swim is essential for your safe enjoyment of the water based activities on this trip. If you wish to participate in these activities then we insist that you are able to swim.

## **Vietnam**

### **Vaccinations**

Nothing compulsory, we recommend protection against malaria, typhoid, tetanus, diphtheria, polio and hepatitis A. Consult your travel clinic for latest advice on Malaria and Zika Virus. Although not compulsory travellers may also wish to immunise themselves against Japanese encephalitis. Please check

the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. The above is not an exhaustive list. Information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by on the NaTHNaC website and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.

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## Family information



Beach and Hotel Pool on Phu Quoc

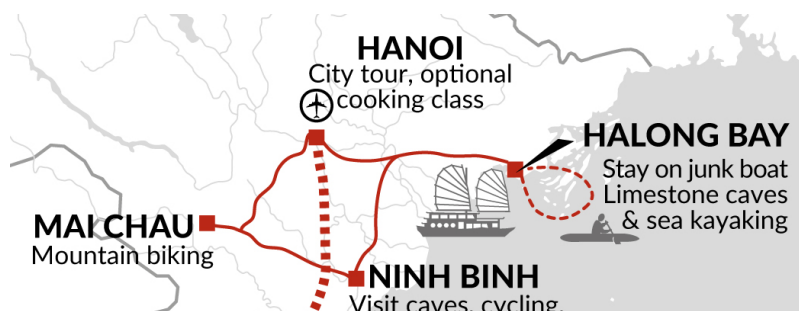
**Extend your stay on the beach:** Why not extend your trip to Vietnam with three nights on the tropical white sand beaches of Phu Quoc Island? Nestled in the warm waters of the Gulf of Thailand this Vietnamese island is 90% national park, a thick-rainforest interior framed by idyllic white sand beaches. Easily accessible by a short flight from Hanoi, Siem Reap or Ho Chi Minh City, this is a great way to unwind after an action-packed trip in Indochina. [Click here](#) for more details.

**Average Age:** As a guide we have identified the actual average age of the children who have travelled on this trip over the the last 5 years, to help you decide whether it's the right one for your family. The average age on this trip is 14 years old.

**Minimum age:** This trip is suitable for children of all ages from 7 upwards.

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## Additional Information





## Why book this trip

This extended holiday to Vietnam spends additional time in the north of the country, known for its rich heritage and beautiful scenery. Spend time in Mai Chau riding along the pathways dividing rice paddy fields and Ninh Binh known as an inland version of Halong Bay with its steep limestone pinnacles and intricate network of inland waterways to explore.

An ideal destination for families who want to explore the best of South East Asia and enjoy travelling on a variety of transport options - bus, train, boat, flight and bicycle. Vietnam is an incredibly welcoming country, and caters extremely well to families of all ages. There are a number of easy active elements to this adventure including trying out Vietnams answer to Kung Fo, sea kayaking in the stunning Halong Bay, kite flying and cycling along the Delta - this adventure also allows us to meet local people and visit their homes including when we make kites and rice-paper. A great trip from one end of the country to the other.

At the end of your trip you can extend your tour with a four night tropical beach extension to Phu Quoc (trip code VB) known for its expansive white sand beaches. Located off the south west coast of Vietnam, enjoy three nights at the for star Amarin Resort and Spa from £249 per person based on twin share including return flights from Ho Chi Minh City, transfers and daily breakfast.

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## Dates, prices and booking

- ▣ Prices may change - book now and today's trip price is guaranteed in our [price promise](#)
- ▣ Book online to secure your price and space. Your deposit is refundable for 14 days. Find out more [here](#)

Departure guaranteed. Find out more [here](#)

**2026**

Hide unavailable

dates

**Mon 27 Jul 2026**

**US\$2580**

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