

# Vietnam's Cultural & Coastal Journey: Hanoi, Hue, Hoi An & Mekong Delta – 13 Days

**13D / 12N**

Duration

**Easy**

Difficulty

**Private**

Tour Type

**USD 1,669 / pax**

Starting From

Embark on a 13-day adventure across Vietnam, blending urban exploration with serene natural landscapes. This journey combines the excitement of scooter tours through ancient cities and tranquil countryside with immersive cultural experiences, including an overnight cruise on Ha Long Bay, cooking classes in Hoi An, and explorations of imperial history in Hue.

## DESTINATIONS & ROUTE

Hanoi → Ha Long → Hoi An → Hue → Ho Chi Minh City

## TOUR OVERVIEW

### Tour Overview

This comprehensive 13-day tour of Vietnam offers an exceptional balance of cultural immersion and scenic exploration. Travelers will navigate the vibrant streets of Hanoi, cruise the iconic limestone karsts of Ha Long Bay, explore the charming ancient town of Hoi An, delve into the imperial history of Hue, and experience the tranquil rural life of the Mekong Delta. The itinerary features unique modes of transport, including scooter tours and bicycle rides, providing an intimate perspective of local life and landscapes.

### Journey Highlights

Navigate Hanoi's vibrant Old Quarter on a scooter, uncovering hidden alleys and local culinary delights. Experience an overnight cruise through the magnificent limestone formations of UNESCO-listed Ha Long Bay. Participate in hands-on cooking classes in Hoi An, learning to prepare authentic Vietnamese dishes. Explore the ancient Imperial Citadel and royal tombs of Hue, delving into Vietnam's dynastic past. Cycle through the serene countryside of the Mekong Delta, observing rural life and local farming. Enjoy a traditional basket boat ride through the nipa palm forests near Hoi An. Journey across the scenic Hai Van Pass by scooter, offering panoramic coastal vistas. Savor a luxury dinner cruise along the Saigon River, admiring Ho Chi Minh City's illuminated skyline.

### Route Summary

The journey begins in the northern capital of Hanoi, moving eastward for an unforgettable cruise through Ha Long Bay. From there, a domestic flight transports you to central Vietnam, where you'll discover the historic charm of Hoi An and the imperial grandeur of Hue. The tour then shifts south with another flight to Ho Chi Minh City, concluding with an exploration of the Mekong Delta's waterways and rural communities.

### Who This Tour Suits

This tour is ideal for travelers seeking an active and culturally rich experience in Vietnam. It appeals to those who enjoy unique modes of transport like scooters and bicycles, appreciate hands-on cultural activities such as cooking classes and craft workshops, and desire a deep connection with local traditions and landscapes. The blend of city exploration, natural wonders, and rural tranquility makes it suitable for adventurous individuals and small groups.

### Practical Information

Accommodation throughout the tour includes a mix of comfortable hotels and an overnight cruise. Meals are provided as specified in the itinerary, offering a taste of authentic Vietnamese cuisine. Domestic flights between key regions are included for

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seamless travel. Local English-speaking guides accompany activities, providing valuable insights into Vietnam's history and culture.

## TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

- \* Navigate Hanoi's vibrant Old Quarter on a scooter, uncovering hidden alleys and local culinary delights.
- \* Experience an overnight cruise through the magnificent limestone formations of UNESCO-listed Ha Long Bay.
- \* Participate in hands-on cooking classes in Hoi An, learning to prepare authentic Vietnamese dishes.
- \* Explore the ancient Imperial Citadel and royal tombs of Hue, delving into Vietnam's dynastic past.
- \* Cycle through the serene countryside of the Mekong Delta, observing rural life and local farming.
- \* Enjoy a traditional basket boat ride through the nipa palm forests near Hoi An.
- \* Journey across the scenic Hai Van Pass by scooter, offering panoramic coastal vistas.
- \* Savor a luxury dinner cruise along the Saigon River, admiring Ho Chi Minh City's illuminated skyline.

## DAY-BY-DAY ITINERARY

Day 1

### Hanoi Arrival & Old Quarter Exploration

Meals: NA | Stay: Hotel in Hanoi | Transport: Airport transfer

Your Vietnamese adventure commences with your arrival in Hanoi, a city brimming with over a thousand years of history and a lively atmosphere. As you transfer to your hotel, observe the captivating blend of French colonial architecture alongside traditional Vietnamese structures. After checking in and settling into your accommodation, the remainder of the day is yours to explore at your own pace.

Venture into the labyrinthine alleys of the Old Quarter, where local vendors offer an array of street food, from steaming bowls of pho to freshly prepared spring rolls. Discover charming cafes where residents relax with traditional Vietnamese coffee, watching the daily rhythm of city life unfold. This initial exploration provides a perfect introduction to Hanoi's unique character and culinary delights.

**Activities:** Arrive in Hanoi  
Transfer to hotel  
Explore Old Quarter independently  
Sample local street food

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**Day 2****Hanoi Scooter Tour: Historic Landmarks & Local Life***Meals: Breakfast, Lunch | Stay: Hotel in Hanoi | Transport: Scooter*

Your morning begins with a hotel pick-up in the Old Quarter, preparing for an exhilarating scooter tour. Before setting off, you'll receive essential safety instructions while enjoying a traditional egg coffee, building anticipation for the journey ahead. The tour commences at the historic Long Bien Bridge, an impressive example of French colonial engineering dating back over a century. Take in the intricate ironwork and architectural details, which silently narrate tales of Vietnam's complex past, along with sweeping views of the Red River flowing below.

Next, your scooter navigates around the serene Hoan Kiem Lake, where you might observe locals practicing tai chi in the early hours, offering a peaceful contrast to the city's energetic streets. The journey continues to St. Joseph's Cathedral, a stunning example of Gothic Revival architecture nestled in the French Quarter. The final stops include the Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum and Hoa Lo Prison, providing profound insights into Vietnam's revolutionary history and resilience. These significant landmarks offer compelling stories of the nation's struggle for independence. A delicious Vietnamese lunch marks the conclusion of this memorable cultural exploration before you return to your hotel for rest.

**Activities:** Meet guide and receive safety briefing

Enjoy traditional egg coffee

Visit Long Bien Bridge

Circumnavigate Hoan Kiem Lake

See St. Joseph's Cathedral

Explore Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum

Visit Hoa Lo Prison

Enjoy Vietnamese lunch

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**Day 3****Scenic Drive to Ha Long Bay & Overnight Cruise**

*Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner | Stay: Cruise in Ha Long Bay | Transport: Air-conditioned vehicle, Cruise boat*

Today, the urban landscape gives way to one of Vietnam's most breathtaking natural wonders. A driver will collect you from your Hanoi hotel for a picturesque journey along the modern Hanoi-Hai Phong Expressway towards the coast. Observe the changing scenery as the city transitions into lush countryside during your transfer.

Upon reaching the ferry port, you will board your chosen cruise vessel for an unforgettable overnight adventure on the water.

The crew will extend a warm welcome with refreshing beverages and provide an important safety briefing. Anticipation builds as the boat begins its navigation through the thousands of towering limestone karst formations that define this UNESCO World Heritage site. A delicious lunch will be served in the ship's elegant restaurant as you delve deeper into the bay.

The afternoon offers opportunities for relaxation, with optional spa treatments available. Later, explore the magnificent Surprise Cave, accessed via over 50 steps, revealing stunning stalactite formations within. As evening approaches, participate in a Vietnamese cooking demonstration, showcasing traditional fruit and vegetable carving artistry. After a delightful dinner on deck, you can engage in night squid fishing or enjoy board games. The gentle sounds of the waves will accompany your peaceful night's sleep in your comfortable cabin. (Please note: The specific cruise route may vary depending on the chosen vessel.)

- Activities:**
- Transfer from Hanoi to Ha Long Bay port
  - Board cruise and receive welcome drinks/safety briefing
  - Cruise through Ha Long Bay
  - Enjoy lunch on board
  - Explore Surprise Cave
  - Attend Vietnamese cooking demonstration
  - Participate in night squid fishing or board games
  - Dine on board

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**Day 4****Ha Long Bay Sunrise & Flight to Hoi An**

*Meals: Breakfast, Brunch | Stay: Hotel in Hoi An | Transport: Cruise boat, Air-conditioned vehicle, Domestic flight*

Your cruise experience concludes with a tranquil morning, waking to the serene sight of limestone cliffs mirrored in the calm waters of Ha Long Bay. Enjoy a final breakfast aboard the boat, savoring the spectacular scenery one last time as you cruise back towards the port. The journey back offers additional chances to spot local fishing boats gracefully navigating among the towering karsts.

After disembarking at the port, your driver will provide a direct transfer to Hanoi's airport for your domestic flight to Da Nang. Feel the excitement of discovering central Vietnam's rich cultural heritage as your plane descends over the coastal landscapes. Upon arrival in Da Nang, a short transfer will take you to Hoi An, where your hotel awaits for check-in. The rest of the day is at your leisure to begin exploring this charming ancient town.

**Activities:** Enjoy morning on Ha Long Bay cruise  
Have breakfast on board  
Disembark at port  
Transfer to Hanoi airport  
Fly to Da Nang  
Transfer to Hoi An hotel  
Check into hotel

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**Day 5****Hoi An Countryside Vespa & Basket Boat Adventure**

*Meals: Breakfast, Lunch | Stay: Hotel in Hoi An | Transport: Vespa, Basket boat, Air-conditioned vehicle*

Your day commences with a convenient pick-up from your Hoi An accommodation at 7:30 AM, setting the stage for a journey that beautifully intertwines heritage, nature, and hands-on cultural experiences. Glide effortlessly through Hoi An's captivating Old Town, where hidden pathways lead to historic homes, vibrant markets, and serene corners steeped in timeless allure. Leaving the city behind, follow a picturesque route along winding backroads, surrounded by verdant rice paddies and peaceful waterways. As you venture further into the countryside, the scenery transforms into a tranquil world of lush greenery and authentic village life.

A highlight of the morning is an engaging basket boat ride through the nipa palm mangrove forest. You'll gently float along quiet channels in a traditional round boat, an experience unique to Vietnam. Afterwards, enjoy a relaxing coffee break with expansive views of the surrounding fields. The tour then continues to a creative up-cycling art gallery, where principles of sustainability meet local craftsmanship in a vibrant display of culture and innovation. Conclude your morning with a home-cooked lunch at Vy's Bistro & Chef Home, where authentic Vietnamese dishes are served in a welcoming, family-style setting. Following this satisfying culinary finale, a short transfer will return you to your hotel, leaving you with cherished memories of the countryside and local warmth.

**Activities:** Get picked up from accommodation  
Glide through Hoi An Old Town on Vespa  
Ride through countryside backroads  
Experience a basket boat ride through nipa palm forest  
Enjoy a coffee break with scenic views  
Visit an up-cycling art gallery  
Have a home-cooked lunch at Vy's Bistro & Chef Home  
Transfer back to hotel

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**Day 6****Hoi An Culinary Journey & Rural Cycling***Meals: Breakfast, Lunch | Stay: Hotel in Hoi An | Transport: Boat, Bicycle*

Start your day with a guided exploration of the Hoi An Central Market, where bustling stalls overflow with colorful produce, aromatic herbs, exotic spices, and local specialties. Your chef will introduce you to key ingredients in Vietnamese cuisine, explaining their culinary and medicinal uses. From the market, embark on a scenic 40-minute boat ride along the tranquil Thu Bon River, passing riverbanks adorned with fishing boats and swaying palm trees.

Arrive at a charming delta village, where your outdoor cooking class awaits beneath the cooling shade of coconut palms.

Before you begin cooking, gain insight into the traditional process of rice preparation using ancient tools, connecting you to the rhythms of rural life. Then, at your individual cooking station, learn to prepare four flavorful Vietnamese dishes: Marinated pork skewers, Banh Xeo (crispy Vietnamese pancakes), Papaya salad, and Vietnamese-style fish (vegetarian options are available upon request, and dishes may vary).

After savoring your delicious creations, hop on a bicycle for a picturesque ride through the countryside, traversing small islands and peaceful villages on your way back to Hoi An. Along the route, you'll have opportunities to meet locals and learn about traditional crafts, including rice wine distillation, the making of basket boats (with a chance to try riding one!), and the art of mat weaving used for traditional sleeping mats. This enriching day offers not only a taste of local flavors but also unforgettable hands-on experiences and a deeper connection to Vietnam's cultural heritage and countryside life.

**Activities:** Visit Hoi An Central Market with a chef  
Take a boat ride along the Thu Bon River  
Learn about traditional rice processing  
Participate in a cooking class (4 dishes)  
Cycle through the countryside  
Observe rice wine distillation  
Learn about basket boat making  
See mat weaving

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**Day 7****Coastal Scooter Ride to Hue via Hai Van Pass***Meals: Breakfast | Stay: Hotel in Hue | Transport: Scooter*

Today begins a thrilling coastal motorbike adventure as you are picked up from your Hoi An hotel. Your ride will take you past Da Nang's three renowned beaches—Marble Mountains, My Khe, and Bac My An—offering expansive sea views and the refreshing ocean breeze. Continue the journey upwards along the legendary Hai Van Pass, a winding mountain road famous for its panoramic vistas over My Khe Beach and Da Nang city. At the summit, pause to absorb the breathtaking landscape and enjoy a cup of local coffee.

Descend the pass to the mountain's base, where a pristine stretch of coastline unfolds, revealing stunning views of Lang Co Beach and its nearby fishing village. From there, head to the invigorating waters of Elephant Springs. Spend approximately one to two hours swimming and relaxing in the cool, natural pools, surrounded by lush jungle and impressive rock formations. After this refreshing break, continue your ride over Phuoc Tuong Pass. Stop for a local lunch and drinks before following quiet backroads along the Tam Giang Lagoon, avoiding the main highway. As you approach Hue, enjoy opportunities to observe local farmers working in their fields and discover the rhythms of everyday rural life. This scenic ride provides a perfect blend of adventure, natural beauty, and cultural immersion.

- Activities:**
- Begin coastal motorbike adventure from Hoi An
  - Ride past Da Nang's Marble Mountains, My Khe, and Bac My An beaches
  - Ascend Hai Van Pass
  - Enjoy panoramic views and coffee at the summit
  - Descend to Lang Co Beach
  - Swim and relax at Elephant Springs
  - Ride over Phuoc Tuong Pass
  - Have a local lunch
  - Follow backroads along Tam Giang Lagoon
  - Observe rural life near Hue

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**Day 8****Hue Imperial City & Perfume River Cruise**

*Meals: Breakfast, Lunch | Stay: Hotel in Hue | Transport: Boat, Air-conditioned vehicle*

Your morning begins with a hotel pick-up and transfer to the boat station. Step aboard a traditional vessel for a picturesque cruise along the Perfume River, renowned for its gentle current and poetic allure. Your initial destination is the iconic Thien Mu Pagoda, Vietnam's tallest religious structure. Perched majestically on a hill overlooking the river, it has become an enduring symbol of Hue and a beloved subject in local folklore.

Continue your journey to the Imperial Citadel of Hue, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of Vietnam's most historically significant architectural complexes. Explore its vast grounds, admire the royal architecture, and walk through ancient gates that once guarded the Nguyen Dynasty. Conclude your tour with a visit to Dong Ba Market, Hue's oldest and most vibrant marketplace. Wander through colorful stalls filled with fresh produce, souvenirs, handmade goods, and traditional snacks, experiencing the lively local commerce. The tour concludes at the Tourist Information Center at 45-47 Le Loi Street between 12:00 and 12:30, leaving you free to continue exploring Hue at your leisure.

**Activities:** Transfer to boat station  
Cruise along the Perfume River  
Visit Thien Mu Pagoda  
Explore the Imperial Citadel of Hue  
Wander through Dong Ba Market

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## Day 9

## Hue's Traditional Crafts &amp; Flight to Ho Chi Minh City

Meals: Breakfast | Stay: Hotel in Ho Chi Minh City | Transport: Air-conditioned vehicle, Boat, Bicycle, Domestic flight

Today's experience begins with a short transfer from Hue, followed by a leisurely stroll through Bao Vinh, a former riverside trading town. Here, you'll find weathered merchant houses and a vibrant local market, offering a glimpse into its once-bustling commercial past. Next, board a local boat alongside villagers wearing conical hats for a peaceful river crossing. On the opposite bank, hop on a bicycle and cycle past flower gardens, verdant rice fields, and charming thatched houses, immersing yourself in the gentle rhythms of Hue's countryside.

Visit a local artisan in Thanh Tien Village, renowned for its delicate paper flowers, traditionally used in spiritual offerings. You'll have the opportunity to create your own flower, a heartfelt souvenir to take home. Continue your ride to Sinh Village, where ancient traditions meet local crafts. Step inside Mr. Ky's workshop, where generations have preserved the fading art of woodblock printing. Learn about natural dyes and the symbolic images used in these folk paintings, once vital for rituals and well-being. Before heading back, pause at a centuries-old pagoda, a serene place where locals seek guidance and wellness through Buddhist teachings. Conclude your cultural journey with a tranquil dragon boat ride back to Hue, reflecting on the blend of craft, culture, and countryside that defines this authentic experience. Later in the day, you will transfer to Hue airport for your domestic flight to Ho Chi Minh City, where you will check into your hotel.

**Activities:** Stroll through Bao Vinh trading town and market  
Cross river by local boat  
Cycle through countryside (flower gardens, rice fields)  
Visit Thanh Tien Village to make paper flowers  
Visit Sinh Village to learn about woodblock printing  
Visit an ancient pagoda  
Enjoy a dragon boat ride back to Hue  
Transfer to Hue airport  
Fly to Ho Chi Minh City  
Check into hotel

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Starting From

**Day 10****Ho Chi Minh City Cycling: Markets, Pagodas & Modernity***Meals: Breakfast | Stay: Hotel in Ho Chi Minh City | Transport: Bicycle*

Start your day with a fresh perspective as you depart from the leafy streets of District 7, a peaceful area removed from the central Saigon bustle. Led by local expert guides from Mr Biker Saigon, this immersive cycling journey will uncover the lesser-known facets of the city across 30-40 kilometers. As you pedal through the city's diverse scenery, your route may include a visit to the vibrant flower market in District 10, alive with bursts of color and fragrant blooms, and the historic Saigon train station in District 3, a bustling hub of daily life and movement.

Continue through intimate alleys along the train tracks in Phu Nhuan, offering an unfiltered glimpse into urban living, then cycle along the peaceful paths of Thi Nghe Canal in Binh Thanh, where locals gather and life slows down. Discover the mystical Jade Emperor Pagoda, filled with the scent of incense and spiritual symbolism, before catching a glimpse of the modern skyline of Sala City in District 2, showcasing Saigon's future. You'll also pass by iconic landmarks such as the Central Post Office, Notre Dame Cathedral, and the Reunification Palace (viewed from outside), all situated in the historic heart of District 1. Throughout the tour, your guides will share captivating insights into Vietnamese culture, history, and daily life, ensuring your ride transcends mere sightseeing to become a true local discovery. The cycling tour concludes back at Mr Biker Saigon's garage around 12:00, leaving you with a deeper appreciation for the energy, contrasts, and authenticity of Ho Chi Minh City.

**Activities:** Cycle from District 7 with local guides  
Visit the flower market in District 10  
See the Saigon train station in District 3  
Explore alleys along train tracks in Phu Nhuan  
Cycle along Thi Nghe Canal in Binh Thanh  
Visit the Jade Emperor Pagoda  
View Sala City in District 2  
Pass iconic landmarks (Central Post Office, Notre Dame Cathedral, Reunification Palace)

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**Day 11****Mekong Delta Cycling & River Cruise**

*Meals: Breakfast, Lunch | Stay: Hotel in Ho Chi Minh City | Transport: Air-conditioned vehicle, Bicycle, Private boat*

Begin your countryside escape with a hotel pick-up in Ho Chi Minh City, followed by a one-hour drive to a local café south of the city. Here, the Mr Biker Saigon team will prepare your bikes and ensure everyone is ready for the ride. Set off on a two-hour cycling adventure along scenic dirt paths, surrounded by lush rice paddies, many raised for irrigation. The route is predominantly flat, offering a gentle, immersive look at Vietnamese rural life, as you pass towering coconut palms, colorful Mekong-style homes, and friendly farmers at work in the fields.

After a refreshing snack and water break at a quiet river overpass, continue your ride along shaded country roads lined with mature native trees. If you feel tired, you have the option to hop into the support van and relax while others continue cycling. Reunite at a local dock and board a private boat for a peaceful 30-minute cruise to a riverside restaurant. Enjoy a well-deserved Mekong-style lunch, featuring authentic flavors from the region, and take time to cool off with a shower and unwind. After this rewarding day, you'll board your private transfer back to Ho Chi Minh City, arriving around 18:00, feeling refreshed, inspired, and filled with unforgettable countryside impressions.

**Activities:** Transfer from Ho Chi Minh City to a local café  
Prepare bikes and receive briefing  
Cycle through rice paddies and rural landscapes (2 hours)  
Enjoy a snack and water break  
Continue cycling on shaded country roads (option for support van)  
Take a private boat cruise to a riverside restaurant  
Enjoy a Mekong-style lunch  
Shower and relax  
Transfer back to Ho Chi Minh City

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## Day 12

### Saigon River Dinner Cruise Experience

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner | Stay: Hotel in Ho Chi Minh City | Transport: Air-conditioned vehicle, Dinner cruise boat

Evening magic transforms your final night in Ho Chi Minh City as you board a sophisticated luxury dinner cruise along the historic Saigon River. Your hotel pick-up commences around 18:45 for transfer to Nha Rong Port, where an elegant vessel awaits your arrival. You will experience the city's stunning nighttime scenery while enjoying expertly prepared fusion and Vietnamese cuisine aboard this floating restaurant.

The Saigon River cruise offers breathtaking views of the illuminated cityscape as you dine on delectable dishes crafted by skilled chefs and staff. Capture beautiful photos with your loved ones against the backdrop of Ho Chi Minh City's glittering skyline. The leisurely journey allows you to relax and take in spectacular sights before the ship gracefully returns to the pier around 20:45, concluding a memorable evening.

**Activities:** Get picked up from hotel  
Transfer to Nha Rong Port  
Board luxury dinner cruise  
Enjoy fusion and Vietnamese cuisine  
Admire Ho Chi Minh City's illuminated skyline  
Dine on board

## Day 13

### Ho Chi Minh City Departure

Meals: Breakfast | Stay: NA | Transport: NA

Your remarkable Vietnamese adventure concludes today as you prepare for departure from Ho Chi Minh City. This 13-day journey has guided you through bustling urban centers, serene rural landscapes, and rich cultural experiences, showcasing the authentic beauty of Vietnam.

You have uncovered hidden gems, savored traditional cuisine, and created lasting memories that will undoubtedly inspire future travels. Reflect on the diverse experiences, from navigating Hanoi's Old Quarter by scooter to cruising Ha Long Bay's emerald waters and exploring the tranquil Mekong Delta, as you prepare for your onward journey.

**Activities:** Enjoy breakfast  
Prepare for departure  
Transfer to airport (optional, not explicitly included in inclusions)

## WHAT'S INCLUDED

### INCLUDED

- ✓ 12 Breakfasts, 6 Lunches, 1 Brunch, 2 Dinner
- ✓ Hotel accommodation for 11 nights
- ✓ Overnight cruise in Ha Long Bay for 1 night

### NOT INCLUDED

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- ✓ Overnight in shared Twin/Double room with Air-condition (AC) at hotel
- ✓ All transport during a tour on the air-conditioned vehicle as per itinerary (including airport pick up & see off)
- ✓ All in-tour stationed local English-speaking guide
- ✓ Entrance fees as per itinerary
- ✓ 2 domestic flights: Hanoi - Da Nang, Hue - Ho Chi Minh City

## PRICE INCLUDES

- ✓ 12 Breakfasts, 6 Lunches, 1 Brunch, 2 Dinner
- ✓ Hotel accommodation for 11 nights
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- ✓ Overnight in shared Twin/Double room with Air-condition (AC) at hotel
- ✓ All transport during a tour on the air-conditioned vehicle as per itinerary (including airport pick up & see off)
- ✓ All in-tour stationed local English-speaking guide
- ✓ Entrance fees as per itinerary
- ✓ 2 domestic flights: Hanoi - Da Nang, Hue - Ho Chi Minh City

## CANCELLATION POLICY

Tour Code: IMP-8BB39FB77455