

Cambodia and Vietnam: Culture and Waterways - 17 Days

17 days · Tailor-made itinerary



Tour photograph · Ho Chi Minh City

Your journey. Your pace. Your experiences.

Siem Reap - Phnom Penh - Chau Doc - Can Tho - Ho Chi Minh City - Hoi An -
Hanoi - Ninh Binh - day trip - Halong Bay

From USD 2,261 per person

Indicative price · international arrival and departure flights excluded

A tour idea we can personalise together.

Your journey at a glance

Destinations: Vietnam · Cambodia



- 1 Siem Reap
- 2 Phnom Penh
- 3 Chau Doc
- 4 Can Tho
- 5 Ho Chi Minh City
- 6 Hoi An
- 7 Hanoi
- 8 Ninh Binh - day trip
- 9 Halong Bay

— Itinerary - - - Arrival & departure

Connections are schematic. Flights depend on your travel arrangements.

Map data: Natural Earth.

What makes this journey special

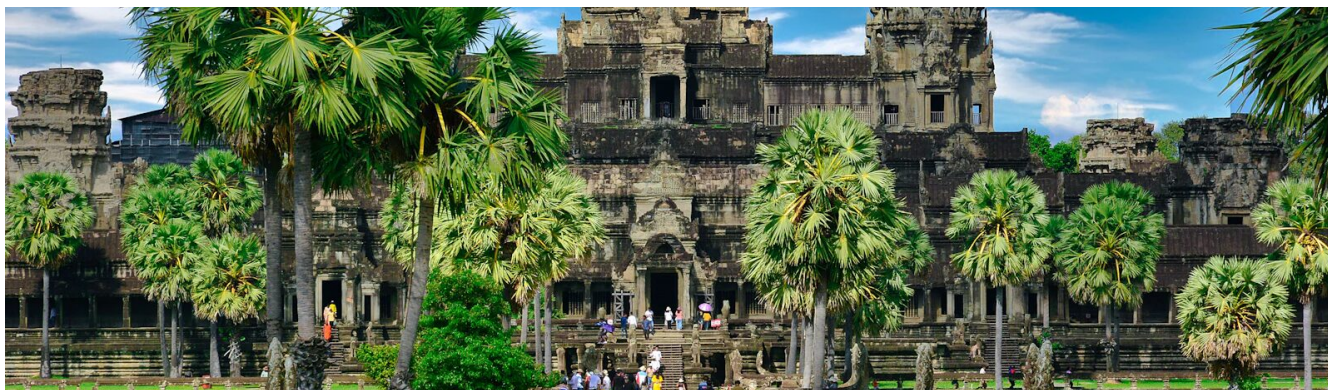
- Angkor and Tonle Sap Lake
- Phnom Penh and speedboat to Chau Doc
- Tra Su Forest and Cai Rang Floating Market
- Cooking and lantern workshops in Hoi An
- Hoa Lu, Trang An and Mua Mountain
- Overnight Halong Bay cruise

DAY 1**Arrival in Siem Reap**

Tour photograph · Siem Reap

Your Cambodia adventure begins in Siem Reap. Your private driver will meet you at the airport with a name sign and take you to your accommodation in the heart of the city. Explore its history and lively culture at your own pace, or relax after your flight.

Overnight in Siem Reap.

DAY 2**Angkor temples: private excursion (B)**

Tour photograph · Siem Reap

After breakfast at the hotel, explore Angkor Thom through its South Gate. Visit Bayon, built by King Jayavarman VII in the late 12th and early 13th centuries and known for its 54 towers, along with the Royal Palace area, Phimeanakas, the Terrace of the Elephants and the Terrace of the Leper King. Continue to Preah Khan, dedicated by Jayavarman VII to his father. This extensive complex served as a Buddhist monastery and school for more than 1,000 monks. In the afternoon, discover Ta Prohm, where giant fig trees and vines wrap around the stonework. Finish with sunset views from Phnom Bakheng.

Overnight in Siem Reap.

DAY 3**Tonle Sap Lake and bus to Phnom Penh (B)**

Tour photograph · Tonle Sap Lake

After breakfast, explore Tonle Sap Lake by private boat with your guide. This great freshwater lake is connected to the Tonle Sap River, which meets the Mekong in Phnom Penh.

See a floating fishing village with schools, a police station and other facilities on the water. The community adapts its position to changing water levels and currents. Afterwards, continue to Phnom Penh.

Overnight in Phnom Penh.

DAY 4**Phnom Penh's history: private excursion (B)**

Tour photograph · Phnom Penh

After breakfast, explore the Royal Palace, the official residence of Cambodia's king and royal family. The extensive grounds offer an introduction to the country's royal history and traditions.

Visit the Silver Pagoda, known for its cultural treasures and richly decorated Buddha figures. Continue to Wat Phnom, a hilltop pagoda with deep historical and spiritual significance, associated with Lady Penh and the city's founding story.

This afternoon, visit Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, the former S-21 prison. Once a school, it became a prison under Pol Pot's security forces. This sobering memorial tells the stories of people imprisoned and killed during the Khmer Rouge regime.

Finish at the Russian Market, also known as Toul Tumpong, to browse clothing, Buddha figures, woodcarvings, silk, silver jewellery and traditional musical instruments.

Overnight in Phnom Penh.

DAY 5**Speedboat to Chau Doc (B)**

Tour photograph · Chau Doc

After breakfast, enjoy free time until your private transfer to the pier. The modern speedboat journey to Chau Doc takes approximately 5.5 hours.

Travel along the Mekong and watch daily life unfold on its banks: small villages, stilt houses, riverside trading, farmers at work and children greeting passing boats.

Overnight in Chau Doc.

DAY 6

Tra Su Bird Sanctuary and Can Tho (B)

Tour photograph · Can Tho

After breakfast and check-out, travel to Tra Su Forest and Bird Sanctuary, around 25 km outside Chau Doc. Take a motorboat into the forest, then change to a sampan for a scenic ride of around 15 minutes through duckweed-covered waterways. From the lookout, enjoy views across the forest and distant hills.

After lunch at a restaurant in the forest area, drive approximately three hours to Can Tho, a major city in the Mekong Delta and a gateway to its floating markets. Winding waterways and orchards shape the surrounding landscape.

The remaining time is yours. You might visit the night market to try regional food, including grilled meat and tofu skewers or banh trang nuong, grilled rice paper often called 'Vietnamese pizza'.

Overnight in Can Tho.

DAY 7**Cai Rang and journey to Ho Chi Minh City (B)**

Tour photograph · Can Tho

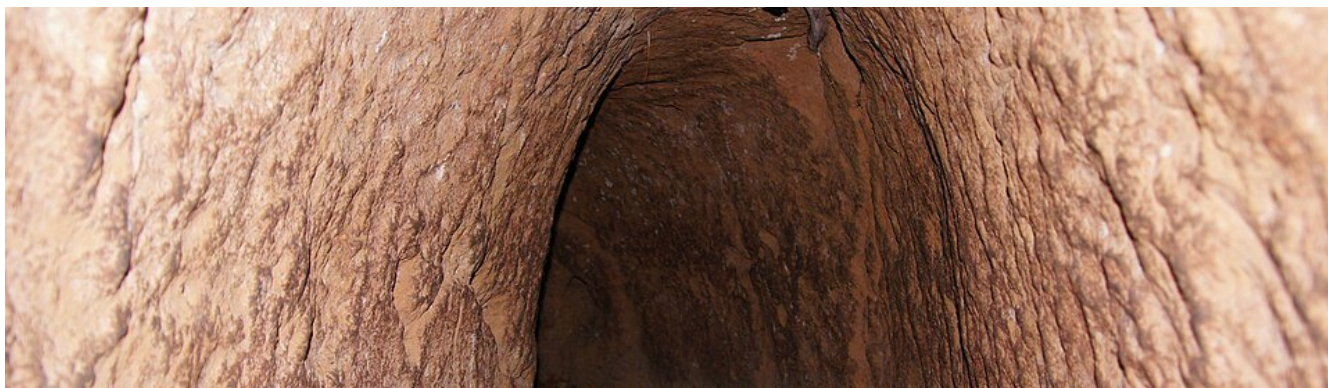
Rise early to explore Cai Rang Floating Market, where produce is traded from boats. Cruise among the vendors, observe the fruit and vegetable trade and learn about the market's river-based way of life. Activity levels vary by season and day.

Enjoy a local breakfast of rice-noodle soup on the boat, then stop at a vendor's boat to try fresh seasonal fruit.

Continue through smaller canals to a traditional rice-noodle workshop. Watch the noodles being made and see how a local 'rice-noodle pizza' is prepared.

After lunch, travel by car to Ho Chi Minh City.

Overnight in Ho Chi Minh City.

DAY 8**Explore the Cu Chi Tunnels (B)**

Tour photograph · Cu Chi

Travel from the meeting point to the Cu Chi Tunnels, approximately 60 km from Ho Chi Minh City, with a drive of around 1.5 hours. This extensive underground network played a key role in the Vietnam War and is remembered for the ingenuity and endurance of those who used it.

Your guide introduces the history of Cu Chi, followed by a documentary about the tunnels' construction and wartime fighting. Explore sections of the network, including weapons workshops, field hospitals, kitchens and living areas. Those who wish can crawl through a tunnel section for a sense of the conditions underground.

Taste cassava, a wartime staple. At a nearby shooting range, an optional activity offers the chance to try an AK-47, the weapon listed in the programme as an MK16, or machine guns, subject to the range's rules. Return to Saigon at the end of the excursion.

Overnight in Ho Chi Minh City.

DAY 9**Fly to Da Nang and transfer to Hoi An (B)**

Tour photograph · Hoi An

After breakfast, relax until your driver takes you to the airport. Fly to Da Nang and transfer to your hotel in Hoi An.

Overnight in Hoi An.

DAY 10**Market, basket boat and cooking class: group experience (B/L)**

Tour photograph · Hoi An

At 08:30, visit a colourful local market. Meet vendors and choose fresh ingredients for your meal while learning about the foundations of Vietnamese cooking.

Explore Cam Thanh, a village connected with the history of the wars against France and the United States. Take a bamboo basket boat through the nipa-palm waterways and enjoy the scenery. Local makers create small palm-leaf keepsakes such as hats, watches or rings.

Try casting a fishing net and catching small purple crabs in the canal.

During a hands-on cooking class, learn about traditional ingredients and methods. Local cooks guide you in preparing five Vietnamese dishes, which you then enjoy together.

Overnight in Hoi An.

DAY 11**Hoi An walking tour and lantern workshop (B)**

Tour photograph · Hoi An

Your guide will collect you from the hotel for a walk through Hoi An's historic Ancient Town.

Begin at the Japanese Covered Bridge, built by Japanese merchants. Hear the legend linking it to Namazu, the mythical creature said to cause earthquakes in Japan, as your guide explains the bridge's stories and distinctive architecture.

At historic Tan Ky House, discover the blend of Vietnamese, Japanese and Chinese architecture. Learn how its design and feng shui express harmony and prosperity.

Continue to the Fujian Assembly Hall, also known as Phuc Kien. Here, the merchant community honours Mazu, the sea goddess believed to protect sailors and travellers.

At a local craft workshop, learn the traditional art of Hoi An lantern making. Create your own lantern with guidance from the craftspeople to take home as a keepsake.

Finish at Hoi An's main market, where your guide explains local trading, shopping and bargaining. Afterwards, continue exploring independently if you wish.

Overnight in Hoi An.

DAY 12**Fly from Da Nang to Hanoi (B)**

Tour photograph · Hanoi

After breakfast, enjoy free time until your private transfer to the airport for your flight to Hanoi.

Overnight in Hanoi.

DAY 13

Hanoi city sightseeing: group excursion (B/L)

Tour photograph · Hanoi

Meet your guide and begin exploring Hanoi.

Visit Tran Quoc Pagoda on Golden Fish Island in West Lake, a historic pagoda with origins in the sixth century.

Explore the Ho Chi Minh Complex, including the mausoleum when accessible. Walk through the gardens to the houses where Ho Chi Minh lived and worked between 1954 and 1969, then visit the distinctive One Pillar Pagoda, dedicated to the Goddess of Mercy.

Please cover your shoulders and knees when visiting the mausoleum, temples and pagodas. The programme lists Monday and Friday closures at the Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum, along with an annual maintenance period. Opening arrangements will be confirmed for your travel dates. When the mausoleum is closed, you can still view the exterior and explore the surrounding grounds.

At the Vietnam Museum of Ethnology, learn about the country's 54 ethnic groups. On Mondays, when it is closed, visit the Vietnamese Women's Museum instead to discover the important role of women in the country's history.

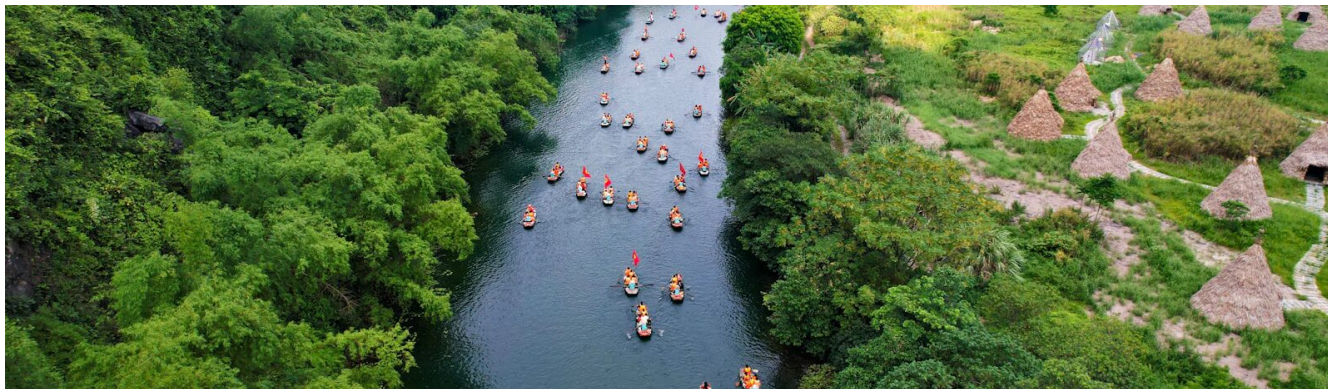
Have lunch at a restaurant serving Vietnamese dishes, with vegetarian options available.

Continue to the Temple of Literature, Van Mieu-Quoc Tu Giam. Founded in 1070 and associated with Vietnam's first university, it remains an important cultural landmark.

Visit Hoa Lo Prison Museum, established by the French colonial administration as Maison Centrale. Its exhibits document the harsh conditions of imprisonment and the Vietnamese struggle against colonial rule.

Return to your hotel by bus, where the excursion ends.

Overnight in Hanoi.

DAY 14**Hoa Lu, Trang An and Mua Mountain: group excursion (B/L)**

Tour photograph · Ninh Binh

Pick-up from your Hanoi hotel is at 07:30 for the journey to Ninh Binh province, around 120 km away. After a short break around 09:30, visit Hoa Lu, Vietnam's former capital. Explore the 17th-century temples honouring Kings Dinh and Le and learn about the ancient imperial city.

At 11:45, enjoy a buffet lunch featuring regional dishes such as goat and fried rice, with vegetarian options available. Continue to UNESCO-listed Trang An for a boat trip through limestone scenery and caves on the planned route, such as Sang, Toi and Nau Ruou. The area featured in Kong: Skull Island.

At Mua Cave, climb around 500 steps to Lying Dragon Mountain for panoramic views over Tam Coc's limestone scenery. Begin the return to Hanoi around 16:30, with arrival at your hotel expected around 19:30.

Overnight in Hanoi.

DAY 15**Halong Bay shared cruise (B/L/D)**

Tour photograph · Halong Bay

Discover UNESCO-listed Halong Bay, with its limestone scenery, time to unwind on board and a choice of cruise activities.

After breakfast, check out and travel from Hanoi to Halong Bay. The cruise team will collect you from the hotel lobby between 8:00 and 9:00 am; we will confirm the exact time the day before.

Around midday, arrive at the pier and take a transfer boat to your cruise ship. After a welcome and check-in, lunch is served as you sail past the bay's many small islands.

In the afternoon, activities may include swimming, kayaking or a cave visit, depending on your cruise itinerary. You are also welcome to relax on board.

Towards evening, the boat anchors in a scenic spot for the night. Enjoy the sunset before dinner.

Overnight on board.

Meals: breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Please note: poor weather may lead to changes or cancellation if boats are unable to leave port. Your travel consultant will arrange an alternative in this case.

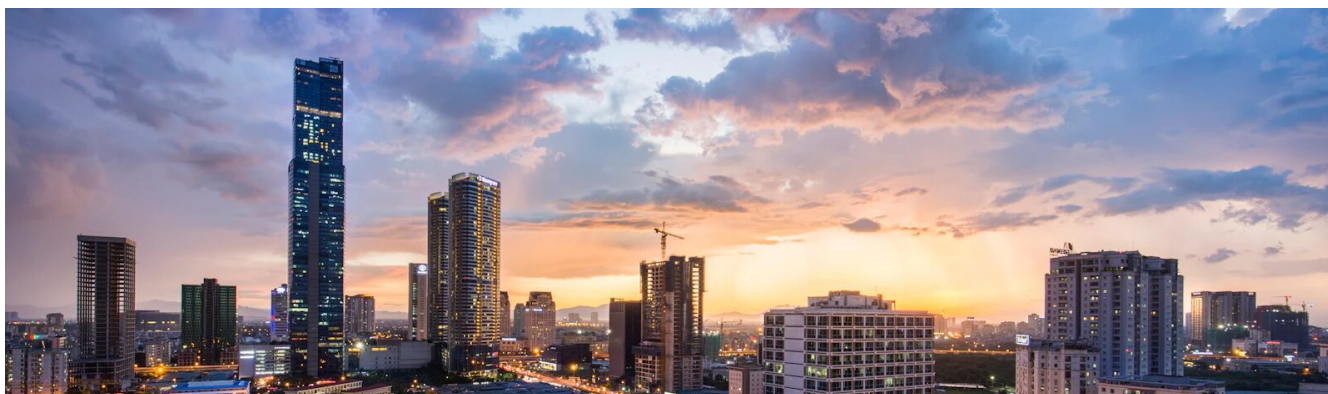
DAY 16**Halong Bay and return to Hanoi (B/Brunch)**

Tour photograph · Halong Bay

Enjoy the morning light over Halong Bay as breakfast is served during the return to the harbour. Have an early lunch before disembarking, then transfer to Hanoi. The rest of the day is yours to explore the city.

Overnight in Hanoi.

Meals: breakfast and lunch.

DAY 17**Departure from Hanoi (B)**

Tour photograph · Hanoi

Enjoy breakfast on your final day. After check-out, you may have time to browse local markets for souvenirs before departing for your flight home.

Your journey ends here.

Included services

- Flight from Ho Chi Minh City to Da Nang with 20 kg of baggage per person.
- Flight from Da Nang to Hanoi with 20 kg of baggage per person.
- Child airfares follow the airline's conditions at booking. Please contact us for a quote if travelling with more than one child.
- Experienced English-speaking guide. German-, French-, Spanish- or Dutch-speaking guides are available on request for a supplement.
- Meals as listed in the itinerary: B = breakfast, L = lunch, D = dinner.
- Private door-to-door collection and drop-off.
- Return air-conditioned bus transfers between Hanoi and Halong Bay.
- Air-conditioned bus from Siem Reap to Phnom Penh.
- Air-conditioned buses or private vehicles for excursions.
- All sightseeing and admission tickets listed in the itinerary.
- Tissues and drinking water in the vehicle.
- Service charges and government taxes.
- 24/7 assistance through our hotline.

Your personal proposal will set out the included services. Any changes and availability will be confirmed before you book.

Additional costs

- International arrival and departure flights.
- Travel insurance.
- Drinks, personal expenses and tips.
- Early check-in and late check-out unless expressly included.
- Compulsory gala dinners on 24 and 31 December, where applicable.
- Holiday surcharges at Christmas, New Year and Tet in Vietnam, where applicable.
- Airport-transfer surcharges between midnight and 5 am.
- An e-visa or visa for Vietnam and Cambodia, where required.
- Other activities and services not expressly included.

Your personal proposal will set out the included services. Any changes and availability will be confirmed before you book.

Carefully selected accommodation

Suggested hotels by destination and category. Your personal proposal will confirm room types and availability.

Siem Reap

3 stars**Royal Crown Hotel & Spa
or similar****4 stars****Saem Siem Reap or
similar****5 stars****Borei Angkor or similar**

Phnom Penh

3 stars**LCS Hotel or similar****4 stars****Anik Palace or similar****5 stars****Palace Gate Hotel &
Resort or similar**

Chau Doc

3 stars**Chau Pho Hotel or similar****4 stars****Victoria Chau Doc Hotel
or similar**

Deluxe

5 stars**Victoria Chau Doc Hotel
or similar**

Suite

Can Tho

3 stars**Ninh Kieu Riverside Hotel
or similar****4 stars****TTC Can Tho or similar****5 stars****Sheraton Can Tho or
similar**

Ho Chi Minh City

3 stars

Acnos Hotel or similar

4 stars

Paragon Saigon Hotel or similar

5 stars

The Myst Dong Khoi or similar

Hoi An

3 stars

Hoi An Riverside Villas & Apartments or similar

4 stars

The Saga Hoi An or similar

5 stars

Palm Garden Hoi An or similar

Hanoi

3 stars

Chalcedony Hotel or similar

4 stars

Le Jardin Haute Couture or similar

5 stars

Apricot Hotel or similar

Halong Bay

3 stars

Le Journey Premium Cruise or similar

4 stars

Milalux Cruise or similar

5 stars

Amanda Luxury Cruise or similar

Check-in is from 2 pm and check-out is by noon, unless your itinerary specifies otherwise. At Victoria Chau Doc, Deluxe rooms or suites are planned according to your trip category. Final accommodation and cabin categories are confirmed when you book.

These hotels are suggestions, not reservations. If unavailable, a comparable alternative will be offered. Columns show the trip categories; some lodges, homestays and cruises may be the same across categories.

Turn your idea into your journey.

Discuss your route, pace, accommodation and activities with our local travel team. We will help you shape a trip around your interests, with personal advice in English.



Tell us what you have in mind.

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Plan this trip

Chat on WhatsApp

This document is a flexible tour idea, not a booking confirmation. Your personal proposal confirms the agreed services and accommodation. Photographs illustrate the journey and may not show your exact booked arrangements.

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