

DISCOVA

Vietnam













































Xin chao! My name is Phi and I'd like to welcome you to Vietnam.

I'm from the ancient capital of Hue but I've been guiding travellers throughout the 'Land of the Ascending Dragon' (that's Vietnam) for almost a decade.

Vietnam is incredibly diverse, and I believe it's a great country for travelling; follow the 3,000-kilometre long coastline and you'll witness staggering rice terraces and limestone islands in the North, some of the world's largest caves in the central regions, and stunning beaches and lush swampland in the South, with several buzzing cities and quaint towns along the way. A similar diversity can be found in Vietnam's eclectic culture as well as in the range of flavours that make our cuisine world famous.

D Climate & Weather Averages in Vietnam

	Destination	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
 Cold Temperatures can rise up to 20 °C during the day but at night can plummet to 15 °C or lower.	Hanoi												
 Warm Temperatures usually between 22 °C and 32 °C	Central Vietnam												
 Hot Temperatures rise above 32 °C	Saigon												
 Rain Regular rainfall with high humidity and temperatures usually between 25 °C and 33 °C													

* The actual climate of Vietnam's Regions can vary a bit.

Vietnam has a tropical monsoon climate that varies between three regions. Temperatures in Southern Vietnam are fairly constant all year round, with May to October usually being much wetter than the rest of the year. Whilst the rain comes at a similar time in the north, the winter months are much cooler in Hanoi, with temperatures dropping significantly in the far north between December to February. Central Vietnam, on the other hand, experiences hot and dry weather in the first half of the year, with higher rainfall and tropical storms arriving in September.

In general, there is no wrong time to visit the Southeast Asian country, but it's worth keeping these weather variations in mind, especially if planning outdoor activities such as trekking. Travellers looking to explore the entire country in one trip are recommended to come in spring or autumn.

Things to Know

Vietnam



Population

96 million



Capital City

Hanoi



Time Zone

GMT/UTC + 7h Indochina Time



Language

Vietnamese (minority languages include Tay, Muong, Cham, Khmer)



Currency

The Vietnamese dong (VND or ₫) is the country's official currency. ATMs are found throughout the country, accepting most debit and credit cards. There are numerous places, including banks, gold shops and money exchange stalls, that exchange USD, whilst most other major foreign currencies such as EUR, UK GBP and AUS can be exchanged at banks.



Visa

Most foreign citizens need to obtain a tourist visa (30 days single entry and 90 days multiple entry) in advance when travelling to Vietnam, with the exception of a small number of nationalities who can enter the country for a period of up to 15 days visa exempt. Currently there are two ways of obtaining a visa, travellers entering Vietnam by air can apply for a Visa on Arrival (VOA) through a travel agent. They will then receive an approval letter with which they can obtain the visa and entry stamp at the airport. This is the fastest and cheapest process, however, it's only possible to get a VOA when arriving by plane through one of the six international airports. The other option is applying for a visa through the Vietnamese embassy or consulate in advance.

As travel policies change regularly, it's best to check the official government website for the latest regulations before visiting. www.xuatnhapcanh.gov.vn

Festivals

Live some local traditions



Tet

Vietnamese Lunar New Year is the country's most important celebration. During the week-long holiday – that usually takes place between January and February – Vietnamese people pay respect to their ancestors, clean and decorate their houses and welcome the new year together with their family over big meals. Note that during this time many tourist sites and businesses will be closed.



National Day

September 2nd marks the day when former president Ho Chi Minh read the Declaration of Independence at Ba Dinh Square, officially claiming the independence and sovereignty of Vietnam from France and Japan in 1945.



Reunification Day

On the 30th April, Vietnam commemorates the fall of Saigon and the end of the war in 1975.





“One place I recommend visiting is Tam Giang Lagoon. Located close to my hometown, Hue, it’s a little-visited but truly spectacular eco-tourism destination and the place where the region’s three largest rivers meet – making it the biggest lagoon in Vietnam. Besides a rich and diverse ecosystem, the massive water area is also home to local fishing communities who continue to employ traditional techniques.”

Responsible Travel Initiatives



Fight Against Single-Use Plastic



28,847 Plastic Bottles
Saved in 2019



Social Enterprises...

...are an easy and sustainable way to give back to the local communities. One such example in Vietnam is KOTO restaurant in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City. Short for 'Know One, Teach One', the social enterprise provides hospitality and life skills training to disadvantaged and at-risk youth. By taking travellers to the restaurant for lunch and dinner, cooking classes and special dining experiences, Discova contributed more than 30,000 USD of revenue last year.



Local Community

From learning to make ancient crafts such as paper masks to joining a family for a traditional Vietnamese-style dinner, our community-based tourism projects are designed to support the sustainable development of the communities whilst allowing travellers to experience the local life in Vietnam.



Protecting Children

ChildSafe Movement trains individuals and organisations providing them with the tools to protect children and youth. We are working on implementing ChildSafe throughout Discova to do our part in protecting children worldwide.

What to Eat

Taste some local food



Pho Cuon

This adaptation of the famous noodle soup wraps lettuce, fried beef and coriander, in a roll of thick, uncut rice noodles. Served with delicious dipping sauce that mixes fish sauce, vinegar, garlic, green papaya and chilli, it is a worthy alternative to the traditional version.



Bun Cha

This popular dish consists of a plate of rice noodles (bun) and grilled minced meatballs or juicy pork belly (cha) in a bowl of sweet and sour dipping sauce. It's usually accompanied by an array of fresh herbs for even better flavour.



Egg Coffee

The famous 'Ca Phe Trung' is a sweet and creamy concoction of Vietnamese robusta coffee, condensed milk, sugar and egg yolks. The ingredients are whipped into a frothy egg cream and layered onto freshly brewed coffee. A delicious and indulging afternoon pick-me-up!



"Vietnamese food is incredibly diverse, and each region has its own specialities. In Hue, try one of the Royal Cakes. These savoury specialties were formerly only served to the Emperors but now can be enjoyed by all."



Join us on an imaginary 15-Day Coastal Explorer of Vietnam.

Take a journey, from north to south, through the wonderful 'Land of the Ascending Dragon'. Begin in the buzzing capital, Hanoi, then head to Halong Bay where jungle-clad karsts create one of the world's finest seascapes. Travel southwards to find historic Hue, the capital of Vietnam's last dynasty, and Hoi An where sea breeze swoops over honey-coloured heritage buildings. End the journey in Ho Chi Minh City, still referred to locally as 'Saigon', to uncover stories of this bustling metropolis and the fertile lands of the Mekong Delta.

Pair five-star luxury with inspiring natural scenery on an unforgettable overnight cruise in the Gulf of Tonkin.

Pelican Group

📍 Lan Ha Bay and Halong Bay

As the first and pioneer cruise company that started organizing trips throughout Lan Ha Bay - Halong Bay, Pelican Group is proud to deliver the standard model of 5-star luxury cruise lines, including Orchid Classic, Orchid Premium, Orchid Trendy, Pelican Classic and Pelican Glory Cruise. Featuring classic Vietnamese architecture style cabins and mentionable highlights of this beautiful wild route, we promise to bring the best experience for our clients to discover World's infamous Heritage Halong Bay.



ORCHID CRUISES
HA LONG BAY - BAI TU LONG BAY - LAN HA BAY

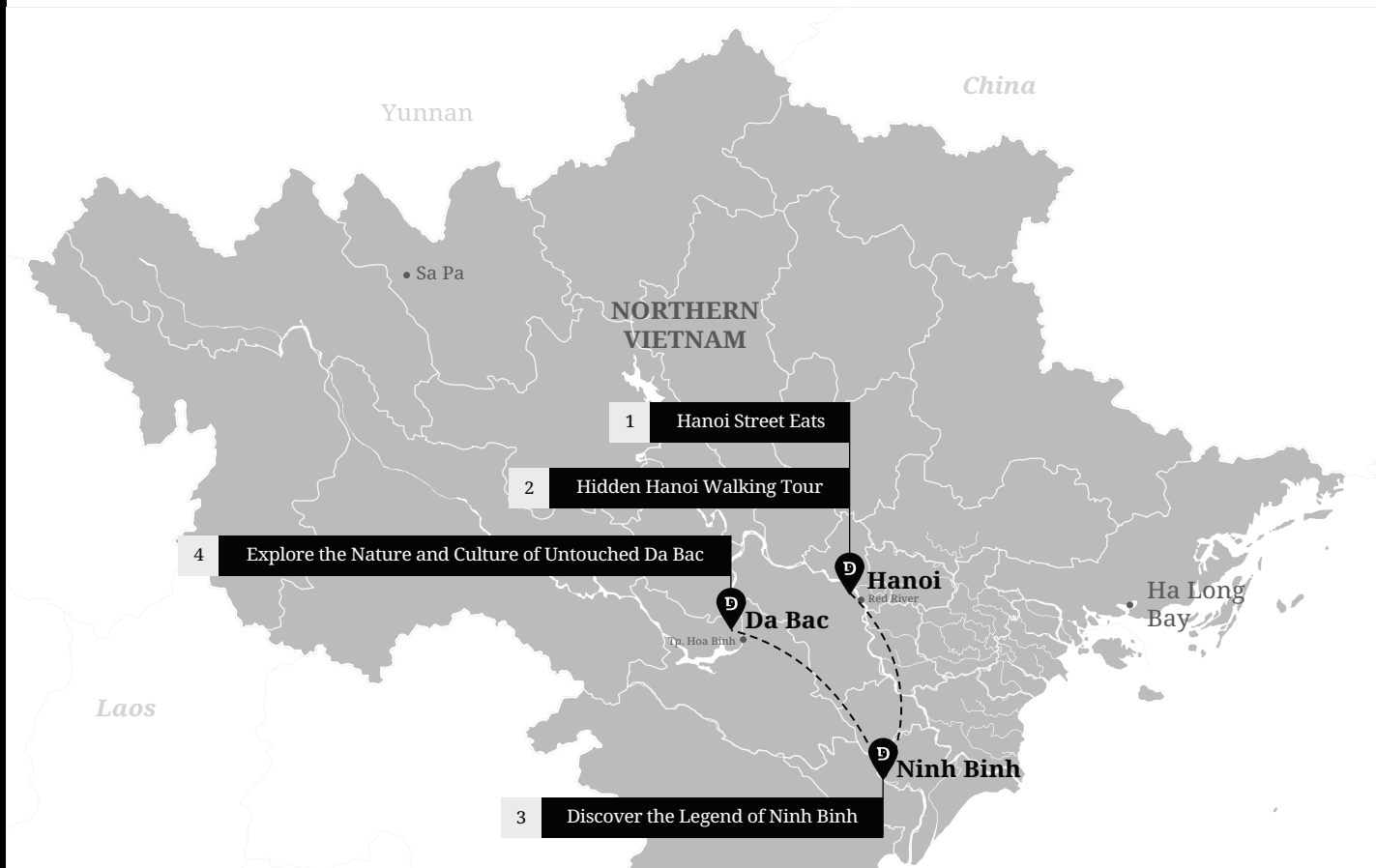




Hanoi & the North

Lined with picturesque architecture, inundated by unyielding motorbikes and infused with the fragrant smells of street kitchens, the streets of Vietnam's vibrant capital are equally enchanting as they are overwhelming. Hanoi's history stretches back many centuries and testaments of its rich heritage can be found all over the city. Whilst ancient temples and churches are reminders of Chinese and French occupation, the Imperial Citadel and Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum are proud examples of the resilient Vietnamese people.

Home to the highest peak on the Indochinese peninsula, Fansipan Mountain, Vietnam's North is characterised by its stunning natural scenery and vibrant hill tribe villages. A popular destination is the mountain town of Sapa, famous for its iconic rice terraces. In the far north are the soaring mountain peaks of Ha Giang and beautiful Ba Be Lake whilst south of the capital lies Ninh Binh, often dubbed 'the Ha Long Bay on land' thanks to its soaring limestone karsts.



"For a truly authentic experience in Northern Vietnam, I can recommend Da Bac. Not too far from Hanoi, it's a great place for hiking as well as getting to know the locals from ethnic minority villages. It's part of a community-based tourism project which means that visiting this region will support the local communities in a sustainable way."



1. Hanoi Street Eats

Savour the flavours of the North on an evening culinary exploration of the capital's Old Quarter. Explore the labyrinth of alleyways and find out what makes Hanoi such an iconic gastronomic destination. Discover the tastes of classic Vietnamese food, including Pho and Banh Mi, wander through a bustling night market and observe the city come to life in the evening.



2. Hidden Hanoi Walking Tour

Discover Hanoi's heart and soul on this half-day walking tour of the city's hidden gems and must-see attractions. Pass by an ancient citadel, a beautiful Catholic church and an impressive Taoist temple before taste-testing some local delicacies. Stop by the historical Long Bien Railway Station and wrap up this exploration with a leisurely cyclo ride through the bustling Old Quarter.



3. Discover the Legend of Ninh Binh

Discover the inimitable beauty of Ninh Binh on a scenic boat ride down the Ngo Dong River. Pass lush rice paddies and looming limestone cliffs on the way to the breathtaking Three Caves. Next, visit the wonderfully peaceful Thai Vi temple and take in monolithic stone carvings before visiting the village of Van Lam Hamlet and learning about the 700-year-old practice of lace embroidery.



4. Explore the Nature and Culture of Untouched Da Bac

Discover a truly authentic side to Vietnam with this three-day adventure to the remote Da Bac community-based tourism project. Explore two ethnic minority villages and gain insight into the local customs and traditions at a homestay. Hike, kayak and swim through the untouched environment and leave this scenic region with a relaxed mind, new perspectives and unforgettable memories.

Discover the Difference

Our specially designed program to this little-known destination offers truly authentic local experiences that promote responsible tourism as all activities and homestays are run by the local community with the guidance of an NGO.

Our Recommended Hotels

Hanoi & the North



Hotel de la Coupole - MGallery ★★★★★

📍 Hoang Lien Street, Sapa District, Lao Cai Province, Vietnam.

Designed by the world-renowned Bill Bensley with sweeping views of Sapa Valley and serene rice paddy fields, Hotel de la Coupole – MGallery integrates the vibrant colours, patterns and textures of the region's minority tribes with the sophistication of haute couture in the 1920s and 1930s French Indochina era.



Silk Path Grand Sapa Resort & Spa ★★★★★

📍 Doi Quan 6, Group 5, Sapa, Lao Cai, Vietnam.

Perched on its own picturesque hill overlooking the marvelous Hoang Lien Son Mountain Range, Silk Path Grand Sapa Resort & Spa is an exceptional blend of local culture, French Indochina architecture and vibrant Sapa touches amid the charms of Northwest Vietnam. Its refined style boasts French colonial design with 152 superb rooms and breathtaking views of spectacular mountains and glistening rice terraces.



Mercure Hanoi La Gare

★★★★

📍 94 Ly Thuong Kiet, Van Mieu, Hoan Kiem, Hanoi, Vietnam.

At the Mercure Hanoi La Gare, you can enjoy all that Hanoi has to offer from the comfort of our 4-star hotel. Conveniently located a 10 minute walk away from the Old Quarter, the hotel is in close proximity to a lot of major historical sites in Hanoi.

Silk Path Hotel Hanoi

★★★★

📍 195 – 199 Hang Bong, Hoan Kiem, Hanoi, Vietnam.

Nestled in the heart of Hanoi, Silk Path Hotel Hanoi affords discerning travelers an unrivaled way to explore all the attractions and culture that the city has to offer. The distinctly eclectic décor marries beautifully with all the modern facilities, creating a truly indulgent experience.



Hoang Son Peace Hotel

★★★★

📍 98 Trinh Tu, Ninh Khanh, Ninh Binh, Vietnam.

Hoang Son Peace Hotel includes 214 rooms of all kinds, each room is fully equipped with amenities, high-class and luxury furniture. Our leading goal and motto is to always create satisfaction, feeling of comfort and relaxation for our customers. Therefore, Hoang Son Peace Hotel always pays much attention to quality of service to meet the increasing needs of customers.

Ha Long Bay & Surrounding Bays

Its translation – ‘Bay of the Descending Dragon’ – seems an apt description for the mythical seascape that is Ha Long Bay. Imagine a forest of foliage-topped limestone karsts rising from the emerald green waters and hidden among them are tiny coves, secret caves and traditional floating villages. The bay was listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1994 and thanks to its close location to Hanoi, makes for an easy weekend getaway from the capital.





One of the best ways to get to know the spectacular natural beauty of Ha Long Bay and visit some of its most famous islands and caves is on an overnight cruise of the UNESCO World Heritage Site. Kayak through emerald water, learn the legends of stunning ancient caves, sunbathe on a pristine private beach, and enjoy incredible on-board experiences like sunrise tai chi, buffet meals, and cocktails by starlight.



Our Recommended Cruises & Hotels

Ha Long Bay & Surrounding Bays



Heritage Line Ginger & Ylang

📍 Lan Ha Bay

Boasting just 12 or 10 extravagant suites, Ginger and Ylang are two of Heritage Line's newest and most exclusive 5-star boutique ships discovering the lesser-travelled and pristine Lan Ha Bay. Enjoy a wonderful themed cruising experience on a 1-night culinary journey (Ginger) or 2-night wellness itinerary (Ylang).



The Au Co 2D1N

📍 Halong Bay & Lan Ha Bay

Sail through both Halong and Lan Ha Bays on our overnight itinerary. Wake up with the sun for an early morning Tai Chi session on the sundeck, or save your energy for kayaking and swimming in the warm, calm water. And savor our special menu: a unique & fresh traditional Vietnamese set menu enhanced with a beautiful cultural dance performance.



The Au Co 3D2N

📍 Halong Bay, Bai Tu Long Bay & Lan Ha Bay

Travel further afield to where few ships go on our 3-day 2-night cruise, taking in the natural beauty of both Halong and Lan Ha Bays. Swim in secluded waters, cycle to a remote village on Cat Ba Island, and experience a floating village in the quiet early morning hours. On board, cooking competitions, a traditional tea ceremony, and our legendary BBQ evening under the stars await.



Aphrodite

📍 Ha Long Bay

We take inspiration from Aphrodite, The goddess of beauty and love for our luxury boutique ship, to explore the romance of Halong Bay. Our vessel features 17 cabins with Luxury, Luxury Private Balcony, Family Suite, and Terrace Suite options. We work to ensure an unforgettable travel experience around Halong Bay. We favor eco-friendly, organic choices and focus on native craftsmanship in support of local livelihoods. So, we maintain socially and environmentally conscious practices to preserve ways of life and nature's gifts in Halong.



Bhaya Classic

📍 Ha Long Bay

A fresh take on a timeless destination. Ideal for the first-time visitor to Halong Bay, the Bhaya Classic is the best Halong Bay cruise which visits the Surprise Cave, the bay's largest and most impressive, as well as hidden gems away from the crowds, like Trinh Nu Beach, exclusively maintained by Bhaya Cruises, on 1 and 2-night itineraries.



Vinpearl Resort & Spa Ha Long

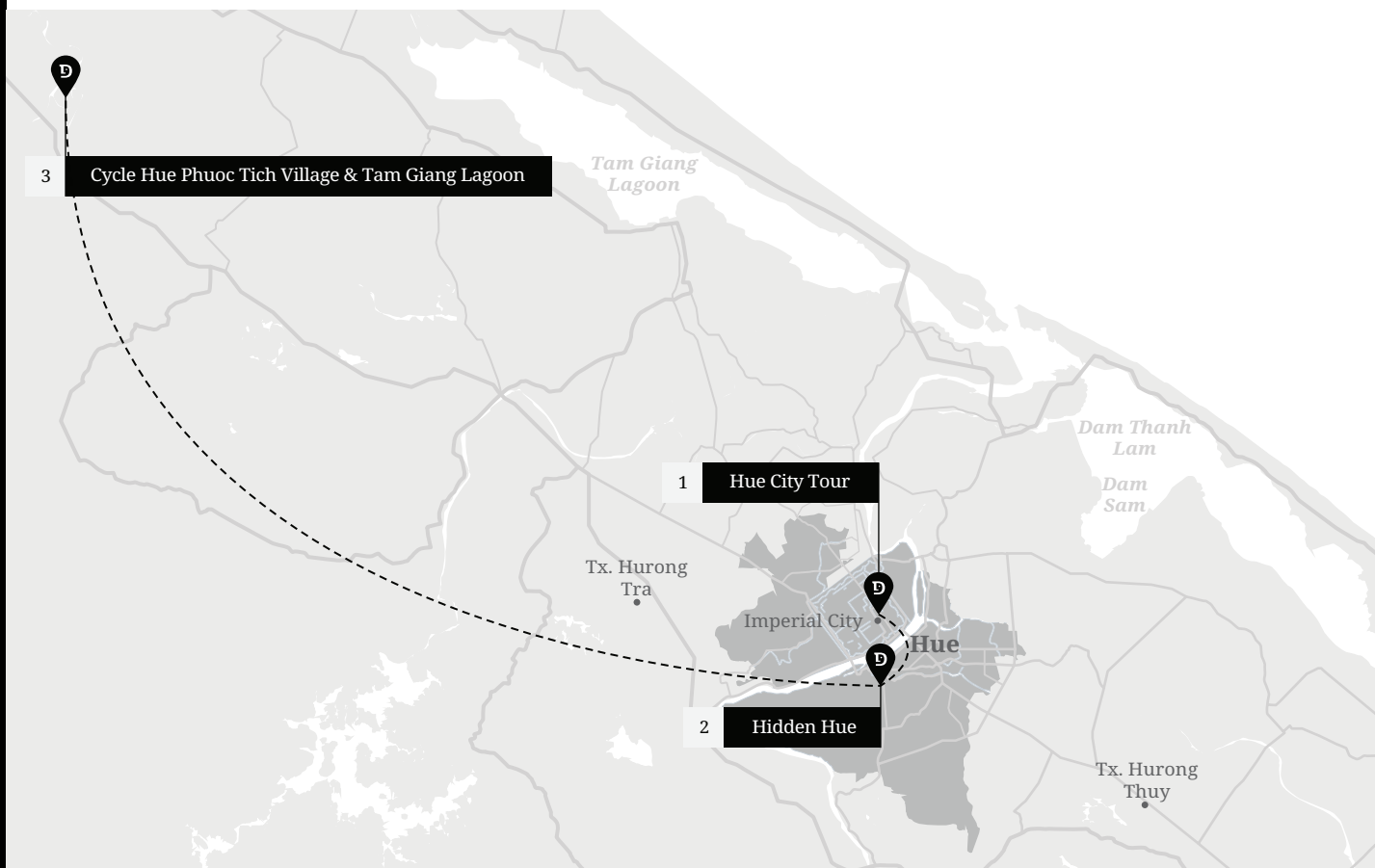
★★★★★

📍 Reu Island, Ha Long City, Quang Ninh Province, Vietnam.

Emerging in the marvelous wonder of Ha Long Bay, Vinpearl Resort & Spa Ha Long is uniquely located above the sea, with a striking design, inspired by the Rennes City Theatre in France. Taking a trip from land and being transported into a world of tranquility, guests are invited to enjoy luxurious rooms, with spacious balconies that open up into the vast beauty of Ha Long Bay.

Hue & Central Vietnam

Located on the banks of the gorgeous Perfume River, Hue has a long and illustrious history and is one of Vietnam's most charming towns. There are several engaging activities in this beautiful part of the country; from contemplating the rambling ancient architecture to visiting the very famous imperial tombs of former emperors dotted all over the city, Hue welcomes all types of travellers in search of unique experiences.





1. Hue City Tour

Discover the historic landmarks of one of Vietnam's ancient cities on this captivating full-day tour of Hue. Visit the walled citadel and learn about the country's fascinating imperial history. Explore the stunning Royal Tombs, the final resting place of the Emperors, along the Perfume River and round off this wonderful day with a boat trip to the country's tallest pagoda.



2. Hidden Hue

A unique half-day tour exploring some fantastic - yet unknown - landmarks of Hue that most tours skip right over. Visit an array of religious temples of undeniable architectonic beauty. After the cultural experience, travellers will get to see some of the local culture visiting the house of an artisan and then delight at a local eatery, to taste some of the city's most famous specialty steam cakes.



3. Cycle Hue Phuoc Tich Village & Tam Giang Lagoon

Travellers will enjoy an experience that will take them to visit a tranquil village of serene streets and traditional houses, learn about the culture, the local life, enjoy traditional food, and even learn to cook it. Then they'll enjoy a bicycle ride to the Tam Giang lagoon to get a glimpse of the lifestyle and the peaceful atmosphere of the ancient villages, before taking a peaceful boat trip in the lagoon.

Our Recommended Hotels

Hue & Central Vietnam



Azerai La Residence

★★★★★

📍 5 Le Loi, Vinh Ninh, Hue City, Thua Thien Hue Province, Vietnam.

Azerai La Residence is an enchanting boutique hotel on the banks of the fabled Perfume River overlooking the former Imperial Citadel – once home to Emperors and now preserved as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Endowed with opulence, excellence and warmth, this former residence of the French Colonial Governor was painstakingly restored in 2005 and redeveloped as an exceptional design hotel.



Vedana Lagoon Resort & Spa

★★★★★

📍 41/23 Doan Trong Truyen Street, Phu Loc Town, Thua Thien Hue Province, Vietnam.

Nestled along the shores of the largest lagoon in Southeast Asia, Vedana Lagoon Resort & Spa offers a peaceful escape from city life. 55 luxuriously-secluded villas with 68 bedrooms are chiseled into the 27 hectare forest landscape for maximum privacy. Features include the first over-water villas in the region for enchanting views across a pristine landscape.



Pilgrimage Village Boutique Resort & Spa

★★★★★

📍 130 Minh Mang, Thuy Xuan, Hue City, Thua Thien Hue Province, Vietnam.

This award-winning family-owned boutique resort, surrounded by lush gardens, is ideally located just minutes away from Hue's famous historical landmarks. A labour of love, the inspired design highlights Vietnamese culture and stylish Zen-like spaciousness with sophisticated detailing and art and craft stalls decorate a unique trade village.



Vinpearl Hotel Hue

★★★★★

📍 50A Hung Vuong, Phu Nhuan, Hue City, Thua Thien Hue Province, Vietnam.

Located in the heart of the Hue citadel city, overlooking the Huong river, Vinpearl Hotel Hue tower with 33 floors emerges as a new contemporary landmark of the city. Modern at first view, the hotel still embraces the traditional signatures that the citadel city is well-loved for.



Vinpearl Luxury Hotel Danang

★★★★★

📍 No. 7 Truong Sa Street, Hai Hoa Ward, Ngu Hanh Son District, Danang, Vietnam.

Situated in a prime location next to the romantic Non Nuoc Beach and Ngu Hanh Son Mountain, Vinpearl Luxury Da Nang takes visitors to a different world of tranquillity, combining breath-taking nature with signature Indochine luxuries. The resort offers the ideal venue to relax with yoga, or enjoy a pampering treatment at the unique Himalayan salt sauna and Akoya Spa.

Hoi An

Once an important trading port of Southeast Asia from the 15th to 19th centuries, the coastal town of Hoi An impresses visitors with its picturesque architecture. This city is very well known for its distinctive regional cuisine that blends centuries of cultural influences from East and Southeast Asia. Indigenous and foreign cultures merged to produce a unique heritage site that makes this port city one of the most atmospheric and delightful towns in Vietnam.





1. Hoi An Street Food Evening Tour

Travellers will set off on a culinary adventure in Hoi An to discover the flavours and dishes that make this coastal town unique. Alongside an expert local guide, the journey introduces visitors to the stories behind Hoi An's most iconic dishes at the town's most famous eateries.



2. Hoi An Countryside Cycling

Hop on a bicycle for a picturesque ride exploring Hoi An's idyllic countryside. Pass rows of rice paddy fields en route to Cam Thanh Village where a local family will share insights about their daily life. Next, hop into a bamboo basket boat and float down the river before learning how to make a traditional lantern, one of Hoi An's most iconic crafts.



3. Local Life River Cruise

Get a glimpse of the fascinating local life along the Thu Bon River on this afternoon boat tour in Hoi An. Learn about the traditions and beliefs of local communities and get a glimpse of life in a fishing village. Try traditional fishing techniques and, if lucky, catch some fish before reaching the river mouth where it debouches into the sea.



4. Cooking Class in Hoi An

Food in Hoi An is light, fresh and delicious. Learn the tricks of the trade on this half-day, cookery experience. Pick the finest ingredients at a thriving food market and get tips for choosing the best ingredients. Learn to prepare a variety of local staples and master the art of food carving, before sitting down to enjoy the culinary creations.

Our Recommended Hotels

Hoi An



Boutique Hoi An Resort

★★★★

📍 34 Lac Long Quan, Cam An, Hoi An, Quang Nam, Vietnam.

Explore the rich heritage of Hoi An at Boutique Hoi An Resort. Discover authentic Vietnamese cuisine and hospitality, unwind in the swimming pool surrounded by lush tropical gardens or indulge in a massage at our hotel spa. Our villas are directly on the beach facing the sea with large terraces for the ultimate in privacy and relaxation.



Le Pavillon Hoi An Boutique Hotel & Spa

★★★

📍 45B Ly Thuong Kiet street, Cam Chau, Hoi An, Quang Nam, Vietnam.

With the advantage of being near the center of Hoi An ancient town, Le Pavillon Hoi An Boutique Hotel & Spa is a great choice for travelers who want to stay in a boutique hotel, right next to the old town but not too noisy, hustle of urban life rhythm.



Le Pavillon Hoi An Luxury Resort & Spa

★★★★

📍 145B Tran Nhan Tong street, Cam Chau, Hoi An, Quang Nam, Vietnam.

The resort is nestled by fresh coconut forest like an oasis in the heart of Hoi An ancient town with a French architectural design combined with modern contours to create a completely different resort space - elegant and luxurious. From the balcony, visitors can admire the spacious natural scenery, the green of the coconut forest, and the golden rice fields.



Le Pavillon Hoi An Paradise Hotel & Spa

★★★★

📍 508 Hai Ba Trung street, Tan An, Hoi An, Quang Nam, Vietnam.

Inspired by Western architecture, breaking the way with the iconic antiquity of Hoi An ancient town and a prime location just 900m from the ancient town of Hoi An, Le Pavillon Hoian Paradise Hotel & Spa offers guests a luxurious and comfortable experience right next to the old town.



Allegro Hoi An. A Little Luxury Hotel & Spa

★★★★

📍 86 Tran Hung Dao Street, Hoi An, Quang Nam, Vietnam.

With the harmonious combination of ancient and modern features, all 94 Suites are elegantly designed and decorated to bring you unsurpassed experiences during your stay. Allegro Hoian – under the A Little Boutique Lux collection offers a warm and luxurious space with its outstanding interiors and furnishings.



Little Beach Hoi An. A Boutique Hotel & Spa.

★★★★

📍 19 Lac Long Quan, Hoi An, Quang Nam, Vietnam.

All 103 Guest Rooms and Suites are elegantly designed, with modern facilities and amenities. All rooms bring a harmonious fusion of antique elegance to modern style. Little Beach is designed to provide guests with contemporary surroundings, comfort and style with personalized service.



Hoi An Ancient House Village Resort & Spa

★★★★

📍 Cam Thanh, Hoi An, Quang Nam, Vietnam.

Hoi An Ancient House Village Resort and Spa -a four-star resort located in Cam Thanh Village, close to seven-hectare Cam Thanh Nipa palm forest and surrounded by paddy fields is an ideal base for exploring Hoi An area, especially the lifestyle of the Hoi An people as well as enjoy the tranquillity of the countryside.



Hoi An Ancient House Resort & Spa

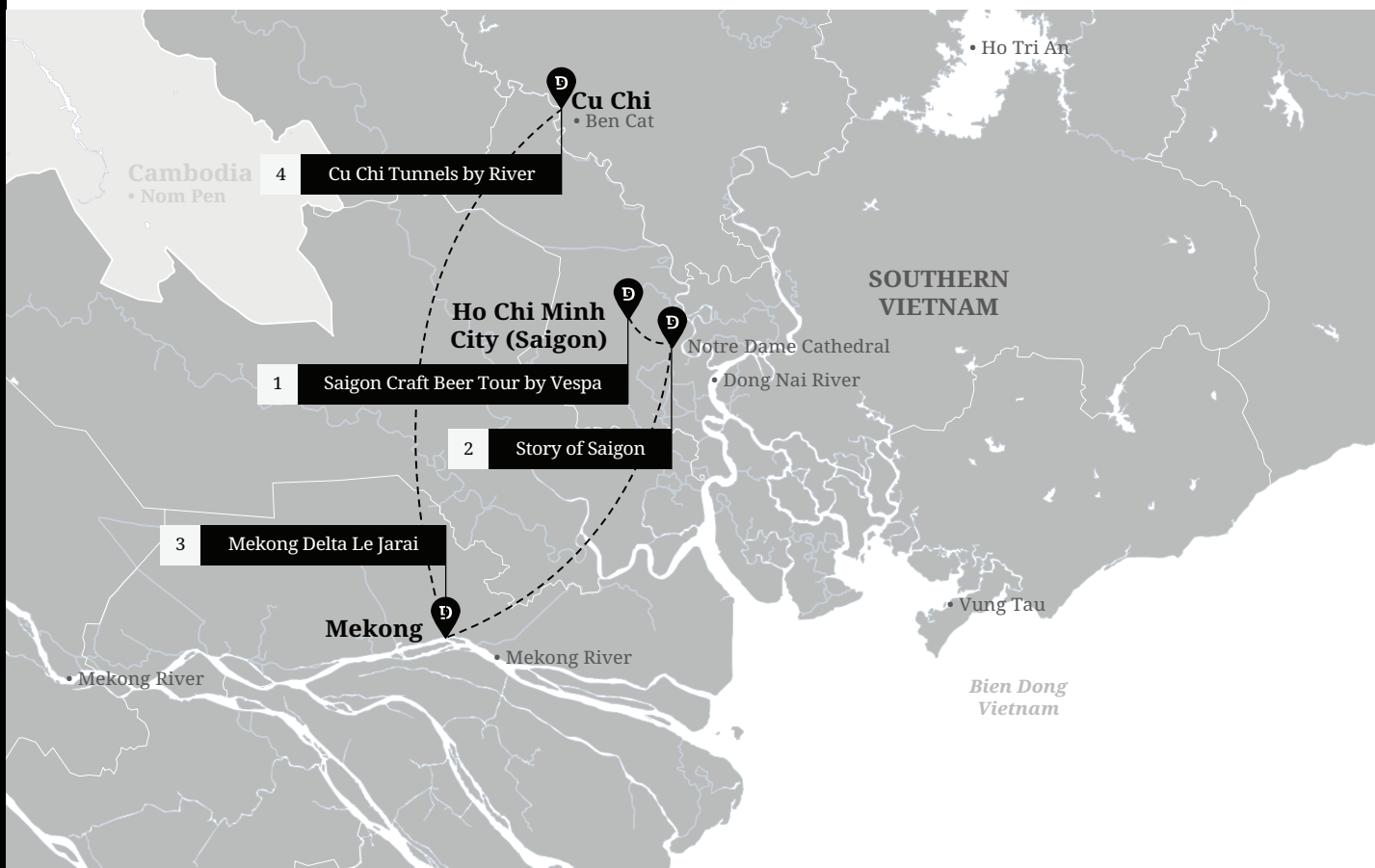
★★★★

📍 377 Cua Dai road, Cam Chau, Hoi An, Quang Nam, Vietnam.

The Ancient House Resort is situated only 1 km from the heart of Hoi An. Based on the town's long history and mix of cultures, the Ancient House Resort is built with special style of Hoi An's ancient houses giving impression of a village with its very natural landscape, houses roofed by clay tile and decorated by round Chinese lanterns.

Saigon & the South

Vietnam's largest and most populous city, Ho Chi Minh City has transformed from historic Saigon into a dynamic and modern metropolis, where historic landmarks across the city and beyond (Cu Chi Tunnels!) shed light on its tumultuous past. From Nha Trang to Phu Quoc Island, the southern coast is lined with popular beach destinations, whilst the labyrinth of rivers and rice paddies of the Mekong Delta has been given the nickname 'rice bowl of Vietnam'.





1. Saigon Craft Beer Tour by Vespa

Clamber aboard a chauffeur-driven vintage Vespa and explore Ho Chi Minh City's burgeoning craft beer scene. Whizz through the bustling streets and visit everything from tiny establishments to large, well-recognised brands, sampling a plethora of craft beers and ciders whilst learning about the unique processes employed to produce the drinks. A fun-filled evening that shines a light on modern life in Saigon.



2. Story of Saigon

Discover the story of Saigon, from a city of conflict to a modern metropolis on this fascinating half-day tour. Visit key locations such as the Central Post Office, Notre Dame Cathedral and the War Remnants Museum, to learn about the city's transition from war-torn Saigon to urban Ho Chi Minh City, before ending the day with a sunset speedboat ride.



3. Mekong Delta Le Jarai

Travel into the heart of the Mekong Delta to explore the waterways of this verdant area also known as the 'rice bowl' of Vietnam. See small homemade factories producing candy and oil from coconuts and visit a bee farm whilst meandering by boat through rivers and small creeks. End the trip with a feast aboard Le Jarai, a beautifully restored teak rice barge.



4. Cu Chi Tunnels by River

Travel by speedboat from Ho Chi Minh City to the Cu Chi Tunnels, an underground city for Viet Cong soldiers during the Vietnam War. Discover how the Viet Cong survived underground and see various man traps, bomb craters and other remnants of war. Wrap up the day trip with a visit to an organic farm to learn about 'farm-to-table' concept.

Our Recommended Hotels

Saigon & the South



Blue Ocean Resort

★★★★★

📍 54 Nguyen Dinh Chieu, Ham Tien – Mui Ne, Phan Thiet city, Binh Thuan province, Vietnam.

Blue Ocean Resort in beautiful Mui Ne is your perfect haven for soaking under the golden sun, delighting in an array of beach activities, or simply lazing along the shores for those quiet moments that you deserve. Their accommodation, spa and food & beverage facilities provide that perfect complement to a dazzling beach in a secluded setting, thus creating that ideal frame of mind for a vacation you will never forget.



Amiana Resort

★★★★★

📍 Nha Trang Bay, Pham Van Dong Street, Nha Trang City, Khanh Hoa Province, Vietnam.

Perched at the edge of the peninsula overlooking sparkling waters of the breathtaking Nha Trang Bay, Amiana Resort is a five-star, award-winning luxury destination. At the heart of our resort is a beautiful 2,500 sqm natural seawater pool, two magnificent freshwater infinity pools, Mud bath & Spa center and a private, guest-only lagoon beach with soft, white sand leading to crystal-clear waters.



Caravelle Saigon Hotel

★★★★★

📍 19-23 Lam Son Square, Ben Nghe Ward, District 1, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.

Enjoy every minute of your stay in the luxury Caravelle's brand new guest rooms that combine modern amenities and our renowned warm Vietnamese hospitality.



Pandanus Resort

★★★★

📍 No 3 Nguyen Huu Tho, Mui Ne, Phan Thiet City, Binh Thuan Province, Vietnam.

Covering 10 hectares of lush tropical gardens just below the famous Red Sand Dunes, the Pandanus Resort is located in the picturesque fishing community of Mui Ne, just 200 km east of Ho Chi Minh City. After its recent expansion the 4-star resort now offers 257 rooms with full amenities, including 48 spacious bungalows with outdoor bathtub.



The Odys Boutique Hotel

★★★★

📍 67 - 69 Nguyen Thai Binh Street, Nguyen Thai Binh Ward, District 1, Ho Chi Minh city, Vietnam.

The Odys Boutique Hotel emanates our love for the Vietnamese soul, symbolised by the elegant image of lotus flower gracing in all our corners. The Odys Boutique Hotel wishes to deliver the poshest hospitality via cedar-wood furniture with timeless design, reminding us of the Vietnamese affluent wooden estates of the old days.



Vinpearl Resort & Golf Phu Quoc

★★★★★

📍 Bai Dai, Phu Quoc Island, Kien Giang Province, Vietnam.

Vinpearl Resort & Golf Phu Quoc is an enchanting and opulent resort with private villas and ocean view rooms, taking the design inspiration from the European neoclassical architecture. Situated in adjacent to an 18-hole golf course, it nestles amidst lush greeneries, untouched forestry, and is dubbed the most beautiful place to watch the sunset in Phu Quoc. The resort also features a beach line spanning 1 kilometer and a beautiful lawn and gardens of up to 5,000 square meters.

Unique MICE Venues

We offer a range of MICE services in Vietnam



Twilight Sky Bar

Hanoi

Living up to its name, the cool, 270-degree rooftop bar is a great spot to watch the sun set over Hoan Kiem Lake with cocktails and nibbles.



EON51 Bar

Ho Chi Minh City

Stretching over three floors, the elegant rooftop venue offers a sky lounge, a dining room and a champagne garden, all above Saigon's glittering skyline.



Jardin des Sens

Ho Chi Minh City

The latest venture of the Michelin-starred Pourcel twin brothers, the restaurant promises a unique dining experience that's based on a contrast of flavours.

Unique Educational Opportunities

We ensure our innovative range of themed programs and educational tours for adults and students make a positive impact and provide opportunities for inspiration, exploration and learning.

In partnership with local communities, organisations and authorities, Discova's educational travel experts have created two community-based tourism projects in Vietnam. The first project was set up in Mai Chau, a mountainous district in North Vietnam, whilst the other was established in

Vinh Long, a rural province in the Mekong Delta in the South. Home to different ethnic minority groups, both locations rely mostly on agricultural and belong to the poorest region's in the country. At both project sites, educational groups have access to a range of service-learning experiences and immersive activities that promote cultural exchange whilst ensuring the sustainable development of the community. All groups are accompanied by Discova's facilitators, providing translation services and cultural guidance.



Community Health Promotion

In partnership with agencies, universities and local health authorities, Discova provides clinical placements for faculty-led medical and nursing students and professionals in Mai Chau and Vinh Long. Mobile clinics are conducted to control, protect and promote health through check-ups, vaccinations and health education. Medical groups work in the clinics to treat ailments under supervision of the local health care practitioners.

"To be able to learn and be shown the medical side of North Vietnam in the mountain area of Mai Chau but to also stay, learn some of the culture and have the local people welcome you into their homes and lives was truly humbling. From the time we landed in Hanoi until the time we left we had the most amazing tour guides who at all times were professional, friendly, knowledgeable and more than welcoming. Their translating was helpful and no doubt trying on occasions. I would highly recommend anyone who is given this opportunity to participate in this program to go for it no matter how old you are."

-Belinda B.

Nursing student from North Metropolitan TAFE who joined a two-week clinical nursing program in Mai Chau



Service Learning

At both locations, educational travel groups can take part in a range of building projects which have been carefully selected through a community needs analysis. In Mai Chau, groups have supported the community by helping build village infrastructure, whilst projects in Vinh Long were focused constructing houses for disadvantaged families. Discova's educational experts provide well-informed project management, ensuring groups contribute effectively to the development of the communities and donations benefit the projects directly.

"Everything ran perfectly! Every morning we got there all our equipment was laid out and locals were ready to help, this meant as soon as we turned up, we started working. There was water, snacks, gloves and face masks provided every day. I feel like the group got so much out of it as they physically got to see the improvement they made, making them work harder and motivating them to fund raise more money for next year. I was hugely impressed with this project phase and don't think anything needs to change with it."

- Group Leader from a World Challenge Group
who joined a house building project in Vinh Long

Cultural Immersion

From gaining a different perspective to being adaptive to different environments – there's no better way to learn about a different culture than by immersing into the community life. At both project sites, educational groups can experience local lifestyles through homestays and a variety of cultural activities, that range from rice farming and hiking to cooking classes and hands-on craft workshops. The residents have been trained and financially supported to become service providers creating additional revenue streams for the host communities.



Adventure Seeker

Vietnam is a land of mountains, mystery, and the world's most spectacular cave systems.



One of the most authentic ways to experience Vietnam is on a bicycle. Pedal easily down the flat pathways that weave through rice paddies like mazes or muscle up the steep mountain ranges that span the country's spine. **Cycle Vietnam** top to bottom, or explore the treasures of each city, one at a time.



The **trekking routes of northern Vietnam** thread through some of the country's most remote landscapes, past curvaceous rice paddies cutting mesmerising lines through the mountain ranges below. The highest mountain in Indochina, Mount Fansipan, is one of these rugged journeys, but any trekking route in Sapa or Ha Giang will do the trick.



Go caving in the 400-million-year-old caverns of **Phong Nha-Ke Bang National Park**, a UNESCO World Heritage Site straight out of Jurassic Park. The water-carved underground caves have broken world records for size and beauty, and the above-ground mountain landscape begs for off-road exploration, whether it be by foot, motorbike or boat.

Culture Enthusiast

4,000 years of history are drizzled throughout the length of the country, each province boasting its own unique cultural heritage.



The capital of the Nguyen empire retains its royalty in stunning architecture and a preserved imperial city. **Explore Hue's landmarks** like the imperial city and royal tombs to walk through the lasting legacy of dynasties, colonialism, war, and triumph.



Hoi An is traditional Vietnam preserved in a bell jar, complete with old women bicycling through spring-green rice paddies, glowing lanterns hung from French balconies, and wooden foot bridges lit up romantically at night.



Take a boat ride through the labyrinth of waterways that make up the fertile **Mekong Delta** to see the endless gradient of green that defines Vietnam's rice bowl. Life here exists on water, complete with floating markets and flourishing ecosystems.

Nature and Wildlife Lover

Underground cave systems, heroic limestone karsts, postcard-perfect beaches, and staggered rice terraces in every imaginable shade of green.



For all its other-worldly beauty, **Ninh Binh** mostly lacks the incessant hordes of tourists that have come to typify some of Vietnam's most famous landmarks. Towering limestone mountains erupt from vivid green rice fields, rivers cut placidly through mysterious valleys, and cave systems are crowned by crumbling temples like jungle secrets.



A boat ride is the best way to see **Halong Bay** in its full splendour. This UNESCO World Heritage Site is somehow more impressive in person than in postcards, with 300-million-year-old limestone karsts jutting impossibly from the sea, topped with sky-high forests and ancient ecosystems.



The crown of Vietnam, **Ha Giang** is the northern frontier of the country. This is a mountainous land of cascading tiered rice paddies: glistening mirrors of water in the wet months, green with springtime's promise of new growth, and glowing-golden in the harvest sun.

Curious Learner

Vietnam is a complex country with endless layers of culture, cuisine, and history to be explored, one mosaic piece at a time.



Hanoi's thousand-year history has been preserved in the city's architecture itself, a dynamic mix of time and influence. Wind through twisting back alleys to unlock the country's heart and living culture piece by piece, making sure to stop at the Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum to pay respects to the founder of contemporary Vietnam.



Vietnam is a country of thousands of flavours, culinary diversity exploding across its 3,000-kilometre stretch. Sample the country's many different regional cuisines and specialties from bottom to top, then **take a cooking class in Hoi An** to take home a taste of the centre.



Study the country's legacy in the **historical landmarks of Saigon** to learn about the city's transformation from civil war and colonization to the modern metropolis it is today. The Cu Chi Tunnels are one of the best ways to appreciate Vietnamese courage and resilience, as is the emotional but informative War Remnants Museum.

Socialiser

From the sky bars and booming discos of worldly Saigon to the arts districts of elegant and cultured Hanoi, there's entertainment here for every night owl.



Rock n Roll, karaoke, craft beer pubs, and packed nightclubs blasting “greatest hits” – Saigon has it all. Even travellers who tend towards gritty punk-rock dive bars should be sure to stop for a cocktail at one of **Saigon’s swanky sky bars** for a breathtaking view of the glimmering city.



Nha Trang is Vietnam’s answer to a Southeast Asian party beach town, complete with cheap beer, loud music, and relaxed dress codes. There’s roaring nightclubs and beachside backpacker bars, and fun-loving revellers mingle on the pretty beach until the early hours of the morning.



Hanoi’s expat district, **Tay Ho**, is alive with creativity. People from all over the world live and play here, mingling with talented locals at lakeside cafés and bopping between experimental DJ sets and epic theme parties at venues like Hanoi Rock City and Birdcage.

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