



We invite you to discover the depth of Vietnam's beauty while traversing the country from north to south on this comprehensive adventure. Travel from Hanoi to Ho Chi Minh City, stopping en route to cruise along Halong Bay, explore ancient Hué, witness the idyllic seaside retreat of Nha Trang, experience French-flavored Dalat, and much more. Thanks to our small group size and regional Trip Experience Leader, you'll enjoy many personal interactions with the people of Vietnam, from meeting the women and children of a local shelter to spending A Day in the Life of Tho Ha village. Plus, throughout your adventure, you'll meet with locals to discuss controversial topics, such as land reform, the country's high abortion rate, post-war re-education camps, life for Vietnam War veterans, as well as the oppression of various ethnic groups. You'll even enjoy an overnight cruise on a traditional Vietnamese sailboat in Halong Bay—an intimate experience that's only possible in a small group like ours. From the bustling cities to the serene seaside to the lush highlands, let Vietnam's warmth and beauty amaze you - in all its diversity.

For More information, visit us at www.uaf.edu/summer/travel.

Important note: Travel insurance is always recommended for any travel out of the United States. There are several ways to purchase coverage. Some credit card companies insure trips that are purchased with their card. Another option is to check with a local travel agency.

Note about Mobility: Our tours are designed for people who are able to walk comfortably for up to 3 miles per day, sometimes on uneven terrain, as well as handle stairs easily. If you have any concerns about this tour, please contact Summer Sessions.

Tour Dates:

December 2-20,
2025

Tour Cost:

\$5,900

Single Supplement
\$750

Inclusions:

- 24/7 Tour Director/Guide
- Educational Programs
- Accommodations
- Ground transportation and in-country flights
- Entry fees
- Three meals per day
- Transfer to and from the airport
- Gratuities

Transportation costs to and from Vietnam are NOT included in this tour price. All travelers must arrange their own transportation to and from the starting and ending cities.

Day 1, December 2: Hanoi

- Arrive in Hanoi, Vietnam's capital and second-largest city and transfer to your hotel.
- Welcome briefing and dinner at your hotel.

Day 2, December 3: Hanoi

- Orientation walk in the morning along the streets of the Old Quarter in Hanoi. Lunch on your own.
- You'll have free time to in the afternoon to relax or to set off and explore the Old Quarter.
- We'll board cyclo-rickshaws, and ride through the Old Quarter to a local restaurant for a Welcome Dinner featuring local cuisine.

Day 3, December 4: Hanoi

- Morning visit to Ba Dinh Square, a pivotal site in 20th-century Vietnamese history. We'll take in the sight of guards and flowers, and we'll also behold the One Pillar Pagoda, widely considered one of Vietnam's most iconic Buddhist temples.
- Lunch at a local restaurant.
- In the afternoon, we'll head to the home of a local water puppet master to watch traditional water puppets in action, enjoy a hands-on demonstration on how to manipulate the puppets, and learn how these intricate puppets are made.
- Dinner is on your own, with the freedom to seek out local cuisine or familiar American standards. The evening is free for you to enjoy as you like.

Day 4, December 5: Hanoi

- In the morning, we head to Tho Ha Village, where we'll see what daily life is like in rural Vietnam. We'll journey north and board a ferry to cross the Nhu Nguyet River to reach our destination. This quaint village showcases traditional architecture, winding streets, terracotta buildings, and an ancient community hall and our day will include a visit to the home of a village chief.
- After we make the return drive to the hotel, enjoy a free afternoon and evening, with dinner on your own.





Day 5, December 6: Hanoi

- We'll travel to Bat Trang, a small village located on the southeastern outskirts of Hanoi, in the morning. We will learn about Bat Trang's signature ceramic pottery during a visit to a pottery workshop, and engage in in-depth conversation with a local family about the land reform practices of 1954-1975. Lunch will be at a local restaurant in Hanoi.
- You can enjoy time on your own this afternoon or join us on an optional street food adventure through the backstreets of Hanoi. Travelers on today's optional tour will dine on a sampling of street food specialties. Otherwise, dinner is on your own. Your Trip Experience Leader can recommend a restaurant.
- Today's optional tour concludes with a night tour of the city's highlights, including the historic French Quarter, the Presidential Palace, the Temple of Literature, Truc Bach Lake, and more.

Day 6, December 7: Halong Bay

- In the morning, we'll head east to Halong Bay, the "emerald bay of Vietnam" and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Upon our arrival, we'll board a traditional wooden sailboat, which will serve not only as our vessel for the afternoon, but also our accommodations for the night.
- As we sail through the bay, we'll experience the sights and sounds of this breathtaking location, stop to explore a cavernous grotto, and then drop anchor at an island pierced with surreal caves.
- After dinner, enjoy a relaxing evening aboard the boat.

Day 7, December 8: Hué

- Early risers may choose to join a session of tai chi on the sundeck, led by a certified instructor before eating breakfast onboard the boat.
- Enjoy the morning cruise back to port on Halong Bay before our transfer to the Hanoi Airport.
- In the afternoon, we'll fly to Hué. Upon landing, we'll transfer to our hotel.

Day 8, December 9: Hué

- Morning departure to Hué, to explore the former imperial capital, built by the first king of the Nguyen Dynasty.
- We'll eat lunch at the Buddhist pagoda, the way the nuns dine - quietly, as this is a meditation lunch. After lunch, we'll enjoy an insightful conversation with one of the nuns that lives here.
- Later, we'll visit Minh Tu Orphanage to learn about the kinds of educational resources available to the young residents. We'll also interact with some of the children.
- Dinner will be at a local restaurant.

Day 9, December 10: Hoi An

- In the morning, we'll drive to a nearby pier where we'll board a boat for a cruise to Thien Mu Pagoda, which dates back to the 17th century, before heading for the coastal village of Hoi An.
- We'll eat lunch at a restaurant en route and then walk to nearby My Khe Beach, which is better known to Americans as China Beach. Then, we'll finish our drive to Hoi An hotel.

Day 10, December 11: Hoi An

- Discover Hoi An's Old Town on a morning walking tour. We'll amble through Hoi An's historic streets and observe the city's mossy houses, including the Phuc Kien Congressional House. We'll eat lunch at a local restaurant.
- You can choose to enjoy the afternoon on your own or join an optional tour that includes a drive to the village of Cam Thanh and a cruise along the Thu Bon River. Apart from the stunning views, this optional tour also provides the opportunity to sample traditional street food as we explore a central market frequented by locals, followed by dinner.

Day 11, December 12: Hoi An

- Morning drive to My Son Sanctuary, Vietnam's most significant ruin from the ancient Champa Kingdom, which prospered from the second to 15th centuries.
- We'll eat lunch at a local restaurant in Hoi An. The rest of the day is on your own.

Day 12, December 13: Nha Trang

- We have time this morning to pack our bags or relax before our afternoon flight to Nha Trang, we'll transfer to our hotel.
- After checking into the hotel, enjoy free time until dinner out at a local restaurant.



Day 13, December 14: Nha Trang

- In the morning, we'll depart for Phuoc Phuc Women's Shelter to meet with the husband-and-wife co-founders, who will introduce us to their organization.
- Next, we'll head to a nearby local market and also enjoy a walk around the village, stopping along the way to say hello to local families. We'll eat a traditional lunch, which we will help prepare, with a family in the village.
- The afternoon and evening are free for you to make discoveries on your own.

Day 14, December 15: Dalat

- In the morning, we'll journey to Dalat, the "City of Eternal Spring". During lunch, we'll have the opportunity to meet members of a local hill tribe—the Montagnards—and hear some of their traditional music while we dine.
- Then we'll depart for our hotel. After settling in, you're welcome to join our Trip Experience Leader for a short orientation walk around the neighborhood. The rest of the afternoon is free.
- In the evening, learn about Dalat's local culture during a Home-Hosted Dinner.

Day 15, December 16: Dalat

- The morning is free to explore the city as you'd like or to join an optional tour focusing on Dalat's agricultural production and village life. Visit a flower market garden, a local coffee plantation, and the isolated, traditional village of Buon Chuoi (Banana Village).

- Lunch If you haven't joined today's optional tour, lunch is on your own. Travelers on our optional tour will enjoy lunch at a local restaurant in Dalat.

- In the afternoon, we all visit Dalat University, where we'll have the chance to meet with some of its students.



Day 16, December 17: Ho Chi Minh City

- In the morning, we'll head to the airport and depart for our flight to the southernmost point of our adventure: Ho Chi Minh City (formerly known as Saigon). Upon landing, we'll dive into our explorations with a city tour.

- We'll have lunch at a local noodle soup restaurant to experience pho, Vietnam's national dish, before checking into our hotel. After settling into the hotel, we'll have an orientation walk around the neighborhood.

Day 17, December 18: Ho Chi Minh City

- We'll embark on a journey out of Ho Chi Minh City to discover Vietnam's famous Mekong Delta, a fertile region often referred to as "Vietnam's rice bowl." Our day will include travel by bus, motorized boat, and sampan (a traditional flat-bottomed wooden boat), and Xe Lambro (three-wheeled vehicles are similar to auto rickshaws you find in India).

- We'll dine at a local restaurant for lunch and then board our motorized boat for a cruise back to the pier before driving back to Ho Chi Minh City.

- The rest of the afternoon is free. Dinner is on your own.



Day 18, December 19: Ho Chi Minh City

- Morning departure for the village of Cu Chi, the namesake for a vast network of tunnels that stretch for more than 160 miles. During the Vietnam War, these tunnels allowed the Viet Cong to control a large area near the former Saigon. We'll explore an area of the tunnels most American tourists don't typically visit. We'll share the lunch meal with a local family in their home.

- After we eat, we'll delve deeper into what life is like for former Viet Cong fighters during a conversation that will examine the Vietnam War—or "American War," as it's referred to in Vietnam.

- In the evening, we'll enjoy a Farewell Dinner at a local restaurant.



Day 19, December 20: Ho Chi Minh City

- Transfer to the airport and catch your return flight home.