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Sorry! There are no remaining departures for "Best of Vietnam" (AVBV), [but here are some similar trips](#).



## **Best of Vietnam**

15 days, Hanoi to Ho Chi Minh City

Trip code AVBV

### **What's included**

- Your G for Good Moment: Oodles of Noodles, Hoi An
- Your Welcome Moment: Meet Your CEO and Group

- Your Local Living Moment: Ta Vinh Homestay, Sa Pá
- Your Discover Moment: Hoi An
- Your Local Living Moment: Mekong Homestay, Mekong Delta
- Water puppet show (Hanoi)
- Sapa excursion to hilltribe villages
- Halong Bay entrance
- Halong Bay boat cruise with seafood lunch and dinner
- Imperial Citadel and Tomb guide and entrance
- Internal flight
- All transport between destinations and to/from included activities

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**VERY IMPORTANT:** Please ensure that you print a final copy of your Trip Details to review a couple of days prior to travel, in case there have been changes that affect your plans.

**VALIDITY:** Valid for all trips departing January 1st, 2017 and onwards

# Itinerary

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**NOTE:** Accommodations vary per departure and are subject to change until tour start date; they are not final and should be used as examples only. Travellers may login to the G Adventures App to view accommodations specific to their departure.

Day 1

## Hanoi

Arrive at any time.

Arrive in bustling Hanoi, the capital of Vietnam. As passengers will be arriving at various times today, there are no planned activities. Take a walk through Hanoi's Old Quarter, visit Tran Quoc Pagoda, the Temple of Literature (Van Mieu) or Ho Chi Minh's Mausoleum and Museum.

Please note that most nationalities requires a visa to enter Vietnam, please double check this with your travel agent or local Vietnamese Embassy.



## Today's Activities

### ACTIVITY

Your opportunity to meet your CEO and fellow travellers, and learn more about your tour. Opt to join the group for a local meal afterwards. Don't forget to see the notice in the lobby (or ask reception) for the official time and place to meet up with the group.

Day 2

## Hanoi/Lào Cai

Enjoy the water puppets show. Opt to visit Ho Chi Minh's Mausoleum and stilt house, Hoa Lo Prison and the Temple of Literature. Overnight train to Lao Cai.

Explore the city during the day and in the evening attend a performance at the famous Water Puppet Theatre before boarding our overnight train to Lao Cai, en route to Sapa.



### Meals included

Breakfast



### Today's Activities

Free Time

Hanoi

Free time to visit local museums or tour Hoa Lo Prison.

Thăng Long Water Puppet Theatre Performance

Hanoi

Watch a traditional Vietnamese water puppet show with beautiful live music and intricate puppets dancing in a water stage.

Basic Overnight Train (beds)

Hanoi - Lào Cai

8h-9h

Sit back, relax and get some sleep during this overnight train journey.



### Optional Activities - Day 2

Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum and Museum Visit

Hanoi

Free-1USD

Tour the Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum and Museum built in the square where Ho Chi Minh read the Declaration of Independence in 1945. Get in line to tour the grounds; queues of visitors come to pay their respects daily.

Hoa Lo Prison Entry

Hanoi

1.50USD

1h-2h

Independently tour the museum of Hoa Lo Prison, referred to as Hanoi Hilton by American prisoners, to learn more about the Vietnam War.

### Vietnamese Women's Museum

Hanoi

1.50USD

The Vietnamese Women's Museum highlights the significant contributions made by women in Vietnam. Take in an independent tour of the museum to gain an in-depth knowledge of women's role in Vietnamese culture, with a key focus on family, history and fashion.

### Museum of Ethnology Visit

Hanoi

2USD

Learn about Vietnam's various ethnic groups on this visit to the Museum of Ethnology – considered to be the finest modern museum in Vietnam.

### Army Museum

Hanoi

2USD

1h-2h

Visit Vietnam's famous Army Museum to learn more about the nation's struggle for independence. With exhibits featuring artifacts from China, France and the United States, this museum has a treasure trove of information to illustrate the country's spirit and determination.

### Temple of Literature Entry

Hanoi

2USD

1h-2h

Visit this sprawling temple built to honour Confucius, sages, and scholars. Dedicated to learning, it housed the country's first university in 1076. Independently explore its five courtyards, containing various gates, altars, sanctuaries, shrines, the stelae of doctors, and the Well of Heavenly Clarity.

### Fine Arts Museum

Hanoi

2USD

Wander through the Fine Arts Museum, where you'll find over 20,000 works of art housed in a former French colonial boarding school. Stand before some of Vietnam's National Treasures, immerse yourself in traditional folk art, find sculptures inspired by deities or admire intricate lacquer and silk paintings you won't find anywhere else.

Day 3

## Lào Cai/Sa Pá

Arrive in Sapa. Hilltribe village visit at Ta Phin, trek and homestay. Traditional meals with a local family.

After arriving in Lao Cai in the morning, we transfer to Sapa. An afternoon excursion takes us to the village of Ta Phin, before returning to Sapa in the early evening.

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### Today's Activities

Private Vehicle

Lào Cai - Sa Pá

45m

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

Ta Phin Excursion

Tả Phìn

Interact with local ethnic minorities such as the H'mong, Dao, and Zai as well as explore the villages before returning to Sapa in the early evening.

Day 4

## Sa Pá

Hilltribe village visit, trek and homestay. Traditional meals with a local family.

Take a moderate trek through the Muong Hoa River valley. Stop at Lao Chai village for lunch and on to the Ta Vinh village for a homestay.

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### Meals included

Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner

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### Today's Activities

Muong Hoa River Valley Trek

Mường Hòa Ho

5h-6h

Trek this scenic river valley that's home to minorities indigenous to this region, such as the Giay, Tay and Xa Pho who still maintain traditional rice paddy terraces along the river system.

#### ACTIVITY

Get an unforgettable experience at a local homestay. Help prepare home cooked meals and learn about culture and traditions. The accommodation is basic but bedding and mosquito nets will be provided.

Day 5

## Sa Pá/Hanoi

Return to Sapa after breakfast with host family. Transfer back to Hanoi.

After breakfast, say goodbye to the host family and walk to a nearby village where we board a bus to take us back to Sapa and then onward to Hanoi for the night.



### Meals included

Breakfast



### Today's Activities

Muong Hoa River Valley Trek

Mường Hòa Ho

2h

Trek this scenic river valley that's home to minorities indigenous to this region, such as the Giay, Tay and Xa Pho who still maintain traditional rice paddy terraces along the river system.

Local Bus

Mường Hòa Ho - Sa Pá

15m

Climb aboard, grab a seat, and enjoy the ride.

Private Vehicle

Sa Pá - Hanoi

4h

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.



### Optional Activities - Day 5

Hanoi Foodie Culture Tour

Hanoi

1-2km

Indulge your inner foodie with a street food tour through bustling Hanoi. Follow your guide through the back streets and markets of the city's old quarter, sampling local fare along the way. Mingle with city natives and experienced street food artists alike, as you taste a variety of Hanoi faves like "nem ran" and "banh goi." Stop at a streetside bar to savour a draught beer like Hanoians do. Cap off the tour at the Hanoi Food Culture restaurant, a G Values Fund Project, and try the city's signature specialty coffee.

Day 6

## Hanoi/Ha Long

Drive to Halong Bay for an overnight cruise on a junk boat which includes a seafood meal. Visit caves or an island lookout.

Our private bus takes us to Bai Chay harbour, our entry point to Halong Bay. Our sailing junk takes you to some islands and caves. You could enjoy an evening drink on the deck beneath the stars.



### Meals included

Lunch | Dinner



### Today's Activities

Shared Van

Hanoi - Ha Long Bay

4h

Climb aboard and make friends with your seatmate en route to the next stop.

Halong Bay Overnight Cruise

Ha Long

Cruise through majestic Ha Long Bay on a traditional wooden junk boat. Enjoy your time afloat eating fresh seafood, exploring Sung Sot cave or opting to kayak. Spend a peaceful night anchored in the bay under the stars.

On rare occasion Halong Bay is closed to tourist vessels by the government authorities due to extreme weather conditions. Should this occur, an alternate activity will be provided.



### Optional Activities - Day 6

Kayaking

Ha Long Bay

10USD

1h-2h

Transfer from boat to kayak in this guided water tour, giving you the chance to get even closer to the stunning natural surroundings.

Day 7

## Ha Long/Huế

Breakfast aboard our junk boat. Return to Hanoi for free time before an overnight train to Hue.

After an early lunch on board the boat we head back to Hanoi. You have enough time for shopping or further sightseeing until our overnight train to Hue.



### Meals included

Breakfast | Lunch



### Today's Activities

Private Vehicle

Bai Chay - Hanoi

3h

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

Free Time

Hanoi

Explore some of the sights of the city or pick up some souvenirs during free time.

Overnight Train (beds)

Hanoi - Huế

13h-14h

Stretch out and get some well-earned rest en route to the next stop.

Included tour of Tien Mu Pagoda and the Royal Tombs.

We arrive early into Hue, once the imperial capital of Vietnam. After checking in to our hotel, we have a tour of Hue, visiting the wonderful seven storey high Tien Mu Pagoda and also an imperial tomb of one of Vietnam's former emperors.

In the evening, you have the chance to try some local Hue specialties such as banh khoai (Hue savoury pancakes), and banh bot loc boc tom thit (thin rice paper filled with meat and shrimp). You might want to wash it all down with a Hue beer. Yum!

Opt to pre-book the "Hue Motorbike Tour" activity on the checkout page ahead of time, to include this optional on your tour.

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## Today's Activities

Hue City Tour

Huế

Take a tour of this imperial city to see the Thiên Mụ Buddhist pagoda, the tallest religious building in the country, the Japanese bridge, and the tombs of the emperors. Visit the Dong Ba Markets for local specialties such as banh khoai (savoury pancakes) and banh bot loc boc tom thit (thin rice paper filled with meat and shrimp).

Thien Mu Pagoda Visit

Huế

Visit Tien Mu, one of the tallest and, perhaps, most elegant pagodas in Vietnam, at seven storeys high. Take a step back in time touring this historic temple - built more than 400 years ago along the north shore of the Perfume River, it has been the site of many political protests.

Free Time

Huế

Use your free time to sample some yummy food and explore the city.

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## Optional Activities - Day 8

Hue Motorbike Tour

Huế

Grab a helmet, hop on a motorbike driven by your experienced local guide, and get ready for a crash course in authentic Viet culture. Spend the next four hours exploring the stalls of a local market,

admiring the view of the Perfume River, learning to plough and make rice, creating your own incense sticks, and seeing the most iconic local sights. Don't forget to bring your camera!

Day 9

## Huế/Hoi An

Travel the scenic Hai Van Pass (weather permitting) on the way to Hoi An.

This morning we'll start our day touring the wonderful ruins of the Imperial Citadel, from where Vietnam was once ruled.

In the late morning we begin our drive to Hoi An. After crossing over the Hai Van Pass, with fantastic views in all directions, we will arrive in Hoi An in the afternoon for our three-night stay.



### Meals included

Breakfast



### Today's Activities

Imperial Citadel Tour

Huế

Tour this one-time capital city and UNESCO World Heritage site. See the walled fortress and former palace, which has many palaces, gateways, courtyards, and gardens to explore. The Forbidden Purple City (modelled on China's Forbidden City) inside the citadel was once home to the imperial family and was significantly damaged during the Vietnam War.

Private Vehicle

Huế - Hoi An

4h

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

Free Time

Hoi An

Get started exploring Hoi An. Tour a museum, visit a tailor or wander through the town on foot.

Day 10

## Hoi An

Enjoy a noodle making demonstration and lunch at Oodles of Noodles, a G Adventures-supported project. Afterwards enjoy free time, options include a cooking class, shopping at the tailors, riverboat cruise, bike riding, beach time or My Son ruins.



### Meals included

Breakfast | Lunch



### Today's Activities

#### ACTIVITY

Try some of the oodles of noodles (more than 26 types!) available in the city in this tasty cooking class. Run by our G for Good partners, STREETS International, this class was developed exclusively for G Adventures. Former street youth that are part of this hospitality training program, will help you prepare and cook a number of different types of noodles. This program helps these youth practice their English, increasing their skill-set and opportunities available to them in the tourism industry. Enjoy your yummy creations while learning more about the local cuisine and this initiative which empowers street youth through skills and employment training.

Free Time

Hoi An

Enjoy some free time in Hoi An any way you want. Check out the beach, take in some local culture or purchase some custom-made clothing from one of the talented tailors in town.



### Optional Activities - Day 10

Thu Bon River Boat Trip

Hoi An

12USD

The Thu Bon River plays an important part in Hoi An's history and culture. Take a trip down the Thu Bon by river boat for an alternative tour of the city.

Cua Dai Beach

Hoi An

Play in the surf at Cua Dai beach about 4km (2.5 mi) away from the Old Town. Make your own picnic of local food and rest under one of the palm trees lining the shore.

Hoi An Cooking Class

Hoi An

35USD

Take a cooking class to learn more about Vietnamese food and its distinct flavours. Tour the local market to buy fresh ingredients before preparing some popular regional dishes. Enjoy your creations when you're done!

Mỹ Sơn Excursion

Mỹ Sơn

38USD

Travel approximately one hour from Hoi An to arrive at My Son. Tour these Hindu temples built between the fourth and 14th centuries; the site is widely accepted as one of the most important Hindu temple complexes in Southeast Asia. Learn about the architectural style and history of a site that's often compared to Angkor Wat in Cambodia and Bagan in Burma. Please note this optional activity is a half-day and includes a guide, transportation, and the entrance fee.

Day 11

## Hoi An

Use a full free day to explore more of this charming town.

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### Meals included

Breakfast

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### Today's Activities

Free Time

Hoi An

Spend time exploring Hoi An.

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### Optional Activities - Day 11

Mỹ Sơn Excursion

Mỹ Sơn

38USD

Travel approximately one hour from Hoi An to arrive at Mỹ Sơn. Tour these Hindu temples built between the fourth and 14th centuries; the site is widely accepted as one of the most important Hindu temple complexes in Southeast Asia. Learn about the architectural style and history of a site that's often compared to Angkor Wat in Cambodia and Bagan in Burma. Please note this optional activity is a half-day and includes a guide, transportation, and the entrance fee.

Thu Bon River Boat Trip

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12USD

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Hoi An Cooking Class

Hoi An

35USD

Take a cooking class to learn more about Vietnamese food and its distinct flavours. Tour the local market to buy fresh ingredients before preparing some popular regional dishes. Enjoy your creations when you're done!

Day 12

## Hoi An/Ho Chi Minh City

Fly to Ho Chi Minh City and opt to take a bike tour of the city, visit the Reunification Palace, Thien Hau, or the Giac Vien pagodas.

Drive to Danang for the flight to Ho Chi Minh City, the sprawling metropolis that was once the capital of South Vietnam and remains the country's commercial center.

The afternoon is free to explore the city.



### Meals included

Breakfast



### Today's Activities

Private Vehicle

Hoi An - Da Nang International Airport

45m

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

Plane

Da Nang International Airport - Tan Son Nhat International Airport

Look! Up in the sky! It's a bird! It's a plane! It's... yup, it is a plane, actually.

Free Time

Ho Chi Minh City

Free time to visit the Thien Hau and Giac Vien pagodas or stroll through Ben Than Market.



### Optional Activities - Day 12

War Remnants Museum Visit

Ho Chi Minh City

2USD

Visit the War Remnants Museum, a gut-wrenching but worthwhile experience that includes three storeys of exhibits and military hardware. Learn about the devastation that occurred in Saigon during the Vietnam War, a period that greatly contrasts the joy and liveliness of the Vietnamese people today.

Dam Sen Water Park Visit

Ho Chi Minh City

4USD

Get away from the hustle and bustle of Ho Chi Minh City at this nearby water park. A lush setting and refreshing water make Dam Sen the perfect place for the whole family to cool off and have some fun— splash around or take a ride down one of the slides.

Cholon Visit

Ho Chi Minh City

Take in the busy rhythm of daily life in Cholon, the Chinatown of Ho Chi Minh City. Tour the area full of teahouses, pagodas, and people, and learn a little more about the unique culture within the city.

Ho Chi Minh City Cyclo Tour

Ho Chi Minh City

10USD

Take a city tour on a cyclo (cycle rickshaw) – a great way to absorb the sights, sounds, and smells of Ho Chi Minh City while keeping your hands free for that camera action.

Reunification Palace Visit

Ho Chi Minh City

2USD

Wander the historic halls of the Reunification Palace (Independence Palace), a landmark in Ho Chi Minh City. This former home of the South Vietnamese president during the Vietnam War became the location of the end of the war when a North Vietnamese tank pushed through the palace gates on April 30, 1975.

Thien Hau Pagoda Visit

Ho Chi Minh City

Visit the Thien Hau Pagoda, a beautiful temple in the Chinatown district of Ho Chi Minh City. Learn more about the customs associated with this 19th-century monument – it is dedicated to the goddess Thien Hau (the 'Lady of the Sea') who is worshipped in Chinese communities throughout Asia by those who depend on the sea for their livelihoods.

Giac Vien Pagoda Visit

Ho Chi Minh City

Find this hidden pagoda behind some small alleyways – it's a rare treat of a monument that has been spared the over-restoration that has been done to so many temples. Tour the inside of this 18th-century pagoda to see nearly 100 carvings of divine beings.

Day 13

## Ho Chi Minh City/Mekong Delta

Mekong Delta visit, boat ride and visit to traditional candy factories. Enjoy a local homestay and dinner with a Vietnamese family.

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### Meals included

Breakfast | Dinner

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### Today's Activities

Private Vehicle

Ho Chi Minh City - Mekong Delta

2h30m

95km

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

#### ACTIVITY

Get ready for a change of pace in Vietnam's "rice basket". Explore the complex waterways of the Mekong Delta on a boat tour. Afterwards, take a short xe lam (tuk-tuk) ride to a nearby community for a homestay. Relax in a hammock, explore the area by bike, and get to know the local way of life. This evening savour a traditional southern Vietnamese dinner.

Day 14

## Mekong Delta/Ho Chi Minh City

Option to visit War Remnants Museum, Colonial Quarter, or Ben Thanh Market.

This morning we enjoy an included breakfast before taking a boat and bus to return to Ho Chi Minh City. We will arrive in this sprawling city by midday for your chance to explore the many sites you did not get to see earlier.

Spend our final night as a group reminiscing over our journey through Vietnam over an optional dinner at a local restaurant. After dinner you may want to enjoy a cocktail while viewing the city traffic from above at the iconic Rex Hotel.



### Meals included

Breakfast



### Today's Activities

Private Vehicle

Mekong Delta – Ho Chi Minh City

2h-3h

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

Free Time

Ho Chi Minh City

Get any must-sees you missed the first time in Ho Chi Minh crossed off your list, there's plenty of time this afternoon.



### Optional Activities - Day 14

War Remnants Museum Visit

Ho Chi Minh City

2USD

Visit the War Remnants Museum, a gut-wrenching but worthwhile experience that includes three storeys of exhibits and military hardware. Learn about the devastation that occurred in Saigon during the Vietnam War, a period that greatly contrasts the joy and liveliness of the Vietnamese people today.

Cholon Visit

Ho Chi Minh City

Take in the busy rhythm of daily life in Cholon, the Chinatown of Ho Chi Minh City. Tour the area full of teahouses, pagodas, and people, and learn a little more about the unique culture within the city.

Ben Thanh Market

Ho Chi Minh City

Wander this bustling market for more insight into Ho Chi Minh City. Pick up souvenirs, sample local cuisine, and experience local living. Learn a little history along the way; Ben Thanh started as a cluster of street vendors selling wares by the Saigon River, and was formalized into a true market in 1859.

Thien Hau Pagoda Visit

Ho Chi Minh City

Visit the Thien Hau Pagoda, a beautiful temple in the Chinatown district of Ho Chi Minh City. Learn more about the customs associated with this 19th-century monument – it is dedicated to the goddess Thien Hau (the 'Lady of the Sea') who is worshipped in Chinese communities throughout Asia by those who depend on the sea for their livelihoods.

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Reunification Palace Visit

Ho Chi Minh City

2USD

Wander the historic halls of the Reunification Palace (Independence Palace), a landmark in Ho Chi Minh City. This former home of the South Vietnamese president during the Vietnam War became the location of the end of the war when a North Vietnamese tank pushed through the palace gates on April 30, 1975.

Day 15

## Ho Chi Minh City

Depart at any time.

After breakfast on Day 15, the tour ends and you are free to depart at any time.

Some may continue traveling west through Cambodia with G Adventures. If you are interested in ongoing travel in Cambodia and Thailand have a look at the following trip on our website:

Cambodia Experience

<http://www.gadventures.com/trips/cambodia-experience/AVCW/2012/>

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### Meals included

Breakfast

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### Today's Activities

Departure Day

Not ready to leave? Your CEO can help with travel arrangements to extend your adventure.

## What's included

- Your G for Good Moment: Oodles of Noodles, Hoi An
- Your Welcome Moment: Meet Your CEO and Group
- Your Local Living Moment: Ta Vinh Homestay, Sa Pá
- Your Discover Moment: Hoi An
- Your Local Living Moment: Mekong Homestay, Mekong Delta
- Water puppet show (Hanoi)
- Sapa excursion to hilltribe villages
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- Internal flight
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## What are the main highlights of this trip?

Explore the vibrant streets of Hanoi, trek through hilltribe villages of Sapa, cruise magical Halong Bay, shop in quaint Hoi An, experience a Mekong Delta homestay

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## Is there a disclaimer I should read before booking this trip?

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**VERY IMPORTANT:** Please ensure that you print a final copy of your Trip Details to review a couple of days prior to travel, in case there have been changes that affect your plans.

## **Is there a travel disclaimer for my itinerary I should review before booking this trip?**

While it is our intention to adhere to the route described below, there is a certain amount of flexibility built into the itinerary and on occasion it may be necessary, or desirable to make alterations. The itinerary is brief, as we never know exactly where our journey will take us. Due to our style of travel and the regions we visit, travel can be unpredictable. The Trip Details document is a general guide to the tour and region and any mention of specific destinations or wildlife is by no means a guarantee that they will be visited or encountered. Aboard expedition trips visits to research stations depend on final permission.

Additionally, any travel times listed are approximations only and subject to vary due to local circumstances.

## **What important notes should I be aware of before the trip?**

Please note that in some major cities in Vietnam, many hotel rooms do not have windows.

There may be a weight restriction for the internal flight on this tour. Each passenger is allowed to carry one checked bag with a maximum weight of 15 kg (33lbs). Additional bags or excess weight charges may apply. These charges are the responsibility of the passengers.

## **What is the group leader like?**

All G Adventures group trips are accompanied by one of our Chief Experience Officers (CEO). The aim of the CEO is to take the hassle out of your travels and to help you have the best trip possible. They will provide information on the places you are travelling through, offer suggestions for things to see and do, recommend great local eating venues and introduce you to our local friends. While not being guides in the traditional sense you can expect them to have a broad general knowledge of the countries visited on the trip, including historical, cultural, religious and social aspects. We also use local guides where we think more specific knowledge will add to the enjoyment of the places we are visiting - we think it's the best of both worlds.

## **How large will the group be?**

2019 departures: Max 15, Avg 12; 2020 departures: Max 16, Avg 12.

## **What meals are included in this trip?**

11 breakfasts, 4 lunches, 3 dinners

## **What are the meals like on this trip?**

Eating is a big part of traveling. Travelling with G Adventures you experience the vast array of wonderful food that is available out in the world. Generally meals are not included in the trip price when there is a choice of eating options, to give you the maximum flexibility in deciding where, what and with whom to eat. It also gives you more budgeting flexibility, though generally food is cheap. Our groups tend to eat together to enable you to taste a larger variety of dishes and enjoy each other's company. There is no obligation to do this though. Your CEO will be able to suggest favourite restaurants during your trip. Included breakfasts will usually be asian style consisting of noodles or congee (rice porridge) or bread and eggs. Vegetarians will be able to find a range of different foods, although in some areas the choice maybe limited. While trekking in remote regions food is included, plentiful and made of fresh local ingredients. For all trips please refer to the meals included and budget information for included meals and meal budgets.

## **What are the modes of transportation on my trip?**

Train, local bus, air-conditioned bus, boat, cyclo, plane, walking.

## **What transportation will we take on this trip?**

Train travel in Vietnam is very basic and train cleanliness is often not a priority for train staff. Sleeper trains normally have 4 seats per compartment, which convert into sleeping bunks (two upper and two lower). A sheet, pillow and blanket are provided, although many people prefer to bring their own sleeping sheet. At times, passengers of different genders may be required to share a sleeper train berth and/or share a compartment with people not travelling in your group.

Simple food is available on the train but many people like to stock up on freshly baked bread, cheese and fruit prior to departure. Water should also be bought before the journey.

Train journeys in Vietnam are an experience and allow you to get a real taste of Vietnam.

## **Are local flights included in the cost of the trip?**

All local flights are included in the cost of your tour unless otherwise noted. It is important that we have your passport information at the time of booking in order to process these tickets. Internal flight tickets are issued locally and will be given to you prior to the flight departure.

## **Is there an extra cost for travelling solo?**

We believe single travellers should not have to pay more to travel so our group trips are designed for shared accommodation and do not involve a single supplement. Single travellers joining group trips are paired in twin or multi-share accommodation with someone of the same sex for the duration of the trip. Some of our Independent trips are designed differently and single travellers on these itineraries must pay the single trip price.

## **Where will we stay during the trip?**

Hotels (9 nts), sleeper trains (2 nts), junk boat (1 nt), basic family homestays (2 nts).

## **Do any exceptions apply to Rooming or “My Own Room” on my tour?**

Nights 2, 4, 7 (overnight train); Night 6 (overnight boat); Night 13 (homestay)

## **What is the joining hotel?**

For details of your joining hotel please refer to your tour voucher, G Account, the G Adventures App or contact your travel agent.

## **What are the joining instructions?**

When arriving at Noi Bai Intl Airport in Hanoi you have a choice of pre paid taxi or Vietnam Airlines shuttle bus to get you into the city. The airport is 35 km outside of the city and the drive should take between 40-50 minutes depending on traffic. The airport taxis are a safe and convenient way to arrive at your hotel. The cost is 16 USD and is paid directly to your driver upon arrival at the hotel. The other option is to take the Vietnam Airlines shuttle bus which drops everyone at the Vietnam Airlines office downtown, The cost of the tickets is 45000 Dong (approx 3 USD). From the Vietnam Airline office there are taxis that can take you to your hotel with the meter on about 2-4 USD.

If you have paid in advance for an arrival transfer, a G Adventures representative will be at the airport to meet you. Please note there is a common scam at the airport for non-G Adventures' drivers to pretend they are working for the company. It is very important to confirm your name and booking number with your airport transfer representative. If for any reason you are not met at the airport, please call our local support line. If you are unable to make contact for whatever reason, please make your way to the joining point hotel via taxi.

Please note that Day 1 is an arrival day and no activities have been planned for that day other than your welcome meeting in the evening, so you can arrive at any time.

A G Adventures Representative will organize a short meeting soon after arrival, during which you will meet other tour participants and receive information about general and specific aspects of the trip. A welcome note will be left for you in the hotel so you have all the necessary information regarding the meeting time. If you arrive late, s/he will leave you a message detailing what time and where you should meet the next morning.

## **What happens if I experience problems when arriving?**

We don't expect any problems, and nor should you, but if for any reason you are unable to commence your trip as scheduled, as soon as possible please contact your starting point hotel, requesting that you speak to or leave a message for your CEO (if you are not on a group tour please refer to the emergency contact details provided in this dossier). If you are unable to get in touch with your CEO, please refer to our emergency contact details. If you have pre-booked an airport transfer and have not made contact with our representative within 30 minutes of clearing customs and immigration, we recommend that you make your own way to the Starting Point hotel, following the Joining Instructions. Please apply to your travel agent on your return for a refund of the transfer cost if this occurs.

## Who should I contact in case of an emergency?

Should you need to contact us during a situation of dire need, it is best to first call either the G Adventures Local Representative (if one is listed below) and then our G Adventures Local Office. If for any reason you do not receive an immediate answer, please leave a detailed message and contact information, so they may return your call and assist you as soon as possible.

### AIRPORT TRANSFER

If you have purchased an arrival through G Adventures or if an arrival transfer is included in the cost of your tour, please note that:

Your arrival transfer has been arranged based on flight information provided to us. If you are advised of a flight schedule change within 48 hours of your scheduled arrival time, we will do our best to rearrange your arrival transfer however we cannot guarantee this. If your arrival transfer does not arrive within 30 minutes after you have exited the arrivals area please take a taxi to your start point hotel.

If you are experiencing complications with your Ho Chi Minh City AIRPORT TRANSFER that was booked through G Adventures please call: +84 91 204 0262

### EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS

G Adventures Office Bangkok, Thailand

During Office hours (Weekdays, 9am-5pm Local Time)

From outside Thailand: +66 2 508 8630

From within Thailand: 02 508 8630

After hours emergency number

From outside Thailand: +66 87 049 6074

From within Thailand: 087 049 6074

G Adventures Local Representative (Vietnam)

Ms.Nhung

Emergency number: +84 91 204 0262

If you are unable for any reason to contact our local office, please call the numbers listed below which will connect you directly with our Sales team who will happily assist you. Hours of operation by region can be found [here](#).

Toll-free, North America only: 1 888 800 4100

Calls from UK: 0344 272 0000

Calls from Germany: 0800 365 1000

Calls from Australia: 1 300 796 618

Calls from New Zealand: 0800 333 307

Outside North America, Australia, New Zealand, Germany and the UK: +1 416 260 0999

## **Are there any additional packing suggestions I should consider?**

What you need to bring depends on the trip you have chosen and the countries or regions you are planning to visit. We suggest that you pack as lightly as possible as you are expected to carry your own luggage. As a rule we try not to have to walk more than 15-20 minutes with your bags which is why we recommend keeping the weight of your bags between 10-15kg/22-30lb. Suitcases are not recommended for G Adventures trips! Most travellers carry a backpack or rolling bag of small to medium size (no XXL ones please!) as they need to fit under the beds when travelling on sleeper trains. You will also need a day pack/bag to carry water, cameras and other electronics like ipods and mobile phones.

# What should be on my packing list?

## Conservative Dress:

- Modest clothing that covers knees and shoulders (Long pants, long skirts, shirts that cover shoulders)
- Shawl or scarf (for temple visits)

## Documents:

- Flight info (required) (Printouts of e-tickets may be required at the border)
- Insurance info (required) (With photocopies)
- Vouchers and pre-departure information (required)
- Passport (required) (With photocopies)
- Visas or vaccination certificates (With photocopies)

## Essentials:

- Toiletries (required) (Shampoo, bodywash, soap, etc.)
- Binoculars (optional)
- Camera (With extra memory cards and batteries)
- Cash, credit and debit cards
- Day pack (Used for daily excursions or short overnights)
- Ear plugs
- First-aid kit (should contain lip balm with sunscreen, sunscreen, whistle, Aspirin, Ibuprofen, bandaids/plasters, tape, anti-histamines, antibacterial gel/wipes, antiseptic cream, Imodium or similar tablets for mild cases of diarrhea, rehydration powder, water purification tablets or drops, insect repellent, sewing kit, extra prescription drugs you may be taking)
- Flashlight/torch (Headlamps are ideal)
- Fleece top/sweater
- Footwear
- Hat
- Headphones (Noise-cancelling recommended)
- Locks for bags
- Long pants/jeans
- Moneybelt
- Outlet adapter
- Personal entertainment (Reading and writing materials, cards, music player, etc.)
- Reusable water bottle
- Shirts/t-shirts
- Sleepwear
- Small travel towel
- Sunglasses
- Swimwear
- Watch and alarm clock
- Waterproof backpack cover
- Windproof rain jacket

**Health & Safety:**

- Face masks (Clients will be only be required to wear a face mask where it is mandated by local regulations.)
- Hand sanitizer
- Pen (Please bring your own pen for filling out documents.)

**Sleep Sheet and Pillow:**

- Sleeping bag liner/sleep sheet
- Travel pillow

**Warm Weather:**

- Sandals/flip-flops
- Shorts/skirts (Longer shorts/skirts are recommended)
- Sturdy water shoes/sandals
- Sun hat/bandana
- Swimwear Note: Please pack clothing for the season in which you will be travelling. From Nov-Feb weather can be cold, so please pack warm clothing. From May-Oct it is the wet season, so please bring waterproof clothing.

## When can I do my laundry on this trip?

Laundry facilities are offered by some of our hotels for a charge. There will be times when you may want to or have to do your own laundry so we suggest you bring non-polluting/biodegradable soap.

## What are the visas and entry requirements for my trip?

All countries require a valid passport (with a minimum 6 months validity). Contact your local embassy or consulate for the most up-to-date visa requirements, or see your travel agent. It is your own responsibility to have the correct travel documentation. Visa requirements for your trip will vary depending on where you are from and where you are going. We keep the following information up to date as far as possible, but rules do change and sometimes without warning. While we provide the following information in good faith, it is vital that you check the information yourself and understand that you are fully responsible for your own visa requirements.

Visa information specific to your destination and nationality can be found in our Important Pre-Departure Information page [here](#)

VIETNAM - If you require a visa for Vietnam, they need to be arranged ahead of time (BEFORE your trip) as the processing time varies and they are not available upon arrival.

If you are entering Vietnam by land border, please apply for a regular visa for Vietnam. Many of the land borders we travel through do not accept the Vietnam E-Visa.

## What should I consider when planning my personal expenses and discretionary spending for this itinerary?

Every traveller is different and therefore spending money requirements will vary. Some travellers may drink more than others while other travellers like to purchase more souvenirs than most. Please consider your own spending habits when it comes to allowing for drinks, shopping and tipping. Please also remember the following specific recommendations when planning your trip.

## What should I know about currency, credit cards, and exchanging money while on this tour?

During this tour the local currency you will use is the Vietnamese Dong. As currency exchange rates in South East Asia do fluctuate, we ask that you refer to the following website for the most up to date daily exchange rates: [www.xe.com](http://www.xe.com) for each of the above mentioned currencies. The best way to carry your money is in debit cards, withdrawing cash in local currencies from ATM machines. ATMs are found throughout South East Asia and will generally accept cards on the Visa and Mastercard networks. It is a great idea to travel with both a Visa and Mastercard if at all possible in case of loss or problems with one card, you will have a back up. Please note, your bank will charge a fee for overseas withdrawals. USD Cash is recommended for times when ATMs are not accessible. You should bring some cash with you for emergency situations (please refer to our trip dossier) but carrying only cash is a high safety risk. ATM card/s and some cash is the ideal mix. Travellers cheques can be tricky, timely and expensive to exchange. While we do not recommend that you bring them as your primary source of funds, it is great to have one or two cheques in case of emergency. Thomas Cook or American Express travellers' cheques in US currency are the easiest to exchange. Cash advances can also be made with some banks but are time consuming and tend to have high fees attached. Credit cards can be used at some upmarket restaurants, and at some larger stores if shopping for big items. If you are bringing US Dollars, please make sure that the notes are new and in good condition. Notes older than 2003, or with any tears or blemishes may not be accepted. Be fussy with your bank when buying cash!

## **How much emergency money should I bring on this trip?**

Please also make sure you have access to at least an additional USD \$250 (or equivalent) as an 'emergency' fund, to be used when circumstances outside our control (ex. a natural disaster) require a change to our planned route. This is a rare occurrence!

## **Do I need to pay a departure tax?**

Departure Tax is included in all International and Domestic tickets in China, Thailand & Vietnam.

## **Should I be tipping on my trip?**

It is customary in Asia to tip service providers such as waiters, at approximately 10%, depending on the service. Tipping is expected - though not compulsory - and shows an expression of satisfaction with the people who have assisted you on your tour. Although it may not be customary to you, it is of considerable significance to the people who will take care of you during your travels. There are several times during the trip where there is opportunity to tip the local guides or drivers we use. You may do this individually, or your CEO will offer to collect the money and tip as a group.

Recommendations for tipping drivers and local guides would range from \$1.5-\$3.5 USD per person per day depending on the quality and length of the service; ask your CEO for specific recommendations based on the circumstances and culture. Also at the end of each trip if you felt your G Adventures CEO did an outstanding job, tipping is appreciated. The amount is entirely a personal preference, however as a guideline \$20-25 USD per person, per week can be used.

# What activities are optional on this trip?

## Hanoi

- Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum and Museum Visit (Free-1USD per person)
- Hoa Lo Prison Entry (1.50USD per person)
- Vietnamese Women's Museum (1.50USD per person)
- Museum of Ethnology Visit (2USD per person)
- Army Museum (2USD per person)
- Temple of Literature Entry (2USD per person)
- Fine Arts Museum (2USD per person)
- Hanoi Foodie Culture Tour

## Hạ Long Bay

- Kayaking (10USD per person)

## Huế

- Hue Motorbike Tour

## Hoi An

- Thu Bon River Boat Trip (12USD per person)
- Cua Dai Beach
- Hoi An Cooking Class (35USD per person)

## Mỹ Sơn

- Mỹ Sơn Excursion (38USD per person)

## Ho Chi Minh City

- War Remnants Museum Visit (2USD per person)
- Ho Chi Minh City Cyclo Tour (10USD per person)
- Giac Vien Pagoda Visit
- Dam Sen Water Park Visit (4USD per person)
- Reunification Palace Visit (2USD per person)
- Ben Thanh Market
- Cholon Visit
- Thien Hau Pagoda Visit

## **Are there any health considerations I should know before travelling?**

Please note inoculations may be required for the country visited. It is your responsibility to consult with your travel doctor for up to date medical travel information well before departure.

You should consult your doctor for up-to-date medical travel information well before departure. We recommend that you carry a First Aid kit and hand sanitizers / antibacterial wipes as well as any personal medical requirements. Please be aware that sometimes we are in remote areas and away from medical facilities, and for legal reasons our CEO's are prohibited from administering any type of drug including headache tablets, antibiotics, etc. In Asia pharmacies tend to stock the same western drugs as you get at home but they are usually produced locally so please bring the full drug name with you when trying to purchase a prescription drug. When selecting your trip please carefully read the brochure and itinerary and assess your ability to cope with our style of travel. Please refer to the Physical and Culture Shock ratings for trip specific information. G Adventures reserves the right to exclude any traveller from all or part of a trip without refund if in the reasonable opinion of our CEO they are unable to complete the itinerary without undue risk to themselves and/or the rest of the group.

# What do I need to know to about safety and security on my trip?

Many national governments provide a regularly updated advice service on safety issues involved with international travel. We recommend that you check your government's advice for their latest travel information before departure. We strongly recommend the use of a neck wallet or money belt while travelling, for the safe keeping of your passport, air tickets, travellers' cheques, cash and other valuable items. Leave your valuable jewellery at home - you won't need it while travelling. Many of the hotels we use have safety deposit boxes, which is the most secure way of storing your valuables. A lock is recommended for securing your luggage. When travelling on a group trip, please note that your CEO has the authority to amend or cancel any part of the trip itinerary if it is deemed necessary due to safety concerns. Your CEO will accompany you on all included activities. During your trip you will have some free time to pursue your own interests, relax and take it easy or explore at your leisure. While your CEO will assist you with options available in a given location please note that any optional activities you undertake are not part of your itinerary, and we offer no representations about the safety of the activity or the standard of the operators running them. Please use your own good judgment when selecting an activity in your free time. Although the cities visited on tour are generally safe during the day, there can be risks to wandering throughout any major city at night. It is our recommendation to stay in small groups and to take taxis to and from restaurants, or during night time excursions.

Protests and Demonstrations- Protests and demonstrations, even those that are well intended, have the potential to turn violent with no warning. Counter protests can also turn violent. Action by security forces to disperse demonstrators and protesters may occur at any time. If you are in an area where demonstrators or protesters are gathering, avoid the temptation of staying for a good photo opportunity and leave the area immediately.

Water based activities have an element of danger and excitement built into them. We recommend only participating in water based activities when accompanied by a guide(s). We make every reasonable effort to ensure the fun and adventurous element of any water based activities (in countries with varying degrees of operating standards) have a balanced approach to safety. It is our policy not to allow our CEOs to make arrangements on your behalf for water based activities that are not accompanied by guide(s).

Swimming, including snorkeling, is always at your own risk.

We take all prudent measures in relation to your safety. For ways to further enhance your personal safety while traveling, please visit:

[www.gadventures.com/travel-resources/safety/](http://www.gadventures.com/travel-resources/safety/)

## What are the trip specific safety considerations?

We strongly recommend the use of a neck wallet or money belt while travelling, for the safe keeping of your passport, air tickets, travellers' cheques, cash and other valuable items. Leave your valuable jewellery at home - you won't need it while travelling. Many of the hotels we use have safety deposit boxes which is the most secure way of storing your valuables. A lock is recommended for securing your luggage.

Be aware that petty theft can be an issue in some Vietnamese towns and cities especially late at night. A common tactic is opportunists on motorbikes that drive by and snatch bags. Please always leave valuables and passports etc in your hotel, in safety boxes if available, and only carry with you enough cash to spend for the day. Bags should always be carried over the neck and not left to sit on your shoulder.

## What rules should I know before joining this trip?

Illegal drugs will not be tolerated on any trips. Possessing or using drugs not only contravenes the laws of the land but also puts the rest of the group at risk. Smoking marijuana and opium is a part of local culture in some parts of the world but is not acceptable for our travellers. Our philosophy of travel is one of respect towards everyone we encounter, and in particular the local people who make the world the special place it is. The exploitation of prostitutes is completely contrary to this philosophy. Our CEOs have the right to expel any member of the group if drugs are found in their possession or if they use prostitutes.

## Is travel insurance required for my trip?

Travel Insurance: Travel insurance is compulsory in order to participate on any of our trips. When travelling on a group trip, you will not be permitted to join the group until evidence of travel insurance has been sighted by your CEO, who will take note of your insurance details. When selecting a travel insurance policy please bear in mind that all clients must have medical coverage and that we require a minimum coverage of USD 200,000 for repatriation and emergency rescue. We strongly recommend that the policy also covers personal liability, cancellation, curtailment and loss of luggage and personal effects. If you have credit card insurance we require proof of purchase of the trip (a receipt of credit card statement) with a credit card in your name. Contact your bank for details of their participating insurer, the level of coverage and emergency contact telephone number.

## What is Planeterra?

Planeterra International Foundation is a non-profit organization committed to turning travel into impact by helping local communities earn an income from tourism. Planeterra connects underserved local communities to the benefits of tourism by developing and supporting small community-owned businesses. These businesses support Indigenous people, empower women, grant youth access to employment opportunities, and protect the environment. Planeterra also works to ensure these businesses have a thriving customer base by integrating their projects into G Adventures' itineraries globally.

G Adventures is Planeterra's largest corporate donor, covering all operating costs, so 100% of your donation will bring opportunity to people in need.

G Adventures Dollar-a-day Program - Make Every Day Count - Turn your travel into impact with [Planeterra Foundation](#).

Did you know? Most communities around the world do not benefit from tourism. Give back to the places you visit on your travels by creating opportunities for local people to earn an income, and protect the environment.

Make every day count by donating \$1/day for the length of your trip, and join us in empowering the communities you will visit when you travel. 100% of your donation goes directly to Planeterra projects.

## How should I dress to respect local customs during the tour?

In Asia the dress standard is more conservative than it is back home. When packing try to pick loose, lightweight, long clothing that will keep you cool in the usually hot and humid climate of Asian summers. In predominately Buddhist, Hindu and Muslim countries we ask that you dress respectfully and avoid very short shorts/skirts and singlets/tanktops when visiting temples, mosques or other holy sites.

## How can I share feedback about my trip experience?

Earn 5% off your next G Adventures Tour (up to \$100 USD)\*

After your travels, we want to hear from you! Your feedback information is so important to us and to thank you for your time, we are pleased to offer a 5% discount (up to a maximum of \$100 USD) off your next G Adventures holiday. All you need to do is submit the form within 4 weeks of the completion of your tour, and you'll be able to join the thousands of travellers who have taken 2, 3, 4 or even 10 or more tours with us!

Discount cannot be combined with other offers or applied to 'Independent' style trips. Maximum discount value is \$100 USD (or equivalent currency). Valid for new bookings only. G Adventures reserves the right to withdraw or modify this offer at any time without notice. Limited to one discount per person.

## Does G Adventures have an email newsletter I can subscribe to?

Our adventure travel e-newsletter is full of travel news, trip information, interesting stories and contests. To avoid missing out on special offers and updates from G Adventures, subscribe at [www.gadventures.com/newsletters/](http://www.gadventures.com/newsletters/)

Stay current on how our company invests in our global community through our foundation – Planeterra. Sign up for [Planeterra's monthly news](#) to learn more about how to give back and support the people and places we love to visit.

## How old must I be to join this trip?

You must be 18 to travel unaccompanied on a G Adventures tour. For minors travelling with a guardian over 21 years old, the minimum age is 12.

## Are international flights included in this trip?

No, international flights are generally not included in the price of your tour.

However, on some combo tours travelling between two different countries, international flights are included as part of the itinerary and price of the tour. Please speak to your GCO or booking agent for further details.

In addition, check-in times and baggage allowances/restrictions vary by airline and can change at any time. For the most up-to-date information for your flight, please contact your airline. We recommend checking in online in advance to avoid potential delays at the airport.

## What should LGBTQ+ travellers know about safety and travel considerations on this trip?

The safety and well-being of all of our travelers is a priority at G Adventures and that includes our travelers who identify as part of the LGBTQ+ community. We recognize that there are specific concerns and questions you may have about your adventure in terms of safety and security. We encourage you to visit our [LGBTQ+ page](#) for useful resources to ensure you feel safe and comfortable throughout the duration of your trip. The Equaldex tool linked on this page can be of particular help when deciding where you may want to visit next.

## Dossier Disclaimer

The information in this trip details document has been compiled with care and is provided in good faith. However it is subject to change, and does not form part of the contract between the client and the operator. The itinerary featured is correct at time of printing. It may differ slightly to the one in the brochure. Occasionally our itineraries change as we make improvements that stem from past travellers, comments and our own research. Sometimes it can be a small change like adding an extra meal along the itinerary. Sometimes the change may result in us altering the tour for the coming year. Ultimately, our goal is to provide you with the most rewarding experience. Please note that our brochure is usually released in November each year. If you have booked from the previous brochure you may find there have been some changes to the itinerary.

**VERY IMPORTANT:** Please ensure that you print a final copy of your Trip Details to review a couple of days prior to travel, in case there have been changes that affect your plans.

## Itinerary Disclaimer

While it is our intention to adhere to the route described below, there is a certain amount of flexibility built into the itinerary and on occasion it may be necessary, or desirable to make alterations. The itinerary is brief, as we never know exactly where our journey will take us. Due to our style of travel and the regions we visit, travel can be unpredictable. The Trip Details document is a general guide to the tour and region and any mention of specific destinations or wildlife is by no means a guarantee that they will be visited or encountered. Aboard expedition trips visits to research stations depend on final permission.

Additionally, any travel times listed are approximations only and subject to vary due to local circumstances.