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Sorry! There are no remaining departures for "Vietnam & Laos: Homestays & Houseboats" (AVSC), [but here are some similar trips.](#)



## **Vietnam & Laos: Homestays & Houseboats**

20 days, Ho Chi Minh City to Chiang Mai

Trip code AVSC

### **What's included**

- Your G for Good Moment: Oodles of Noodles, Hoi An

- Your G for Good Moment: Mekong River Homestay & Traditional Performance, Muang Pakbèng
- Your Welcome Moment: Meet Your CEO and Group
- Your First Night Out Moment: Connect With New Friends
- Your Discover Moment: Ho Chi Minh City
- Your Foodie Moment: Nha Trang Street Food Crawl, Nha Trang
- Your Discover Moment: Luang Prabang
- Halong Bay boat cruise with lunch
- Street food crawl (Hoi An)
- Orientation walk around Hanoi's Old Quarter
- Slow boat on the Mekong
- Temples of Luang Prabang
- Witness the giving of alms (Luang Prabang)
- Internal flight
- All transport between destinations and to/from included activities

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 G Adventures. 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.

**VALIDITY:** Valid for all trips departing July 19th, 2017 - January 9th, 2020

# 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

## Ho Chi Minh City

Arrive at any time.

Welcome to the pulsing Ho Chi Minh City, also known as Saigon. For your first night out, wander with your CEO and group through Pham Ngu Lao Street that's popping with many bars and backpackers. Pick the best looking spot and get to know your fellow travellers and cheers to new adventures.

Most nationalities require a visa to enter Vietnam. Please check with your travel agent or local Vietnamese Embassy regarding requirements.

Please note that this tour combines with other G Adventures tours. As such, the staff and some travel companions on your tour may have previously been traveling together with G Adventures, prior to Day 1 of your tour. Likewise, some staff and travel companions may be continuing together on another G Adventures tour, after your trip concludes.



### 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.

#### ACTIVITY

Connect with new friends on your first night out in a new destination. Only available on 18-to-Thirtysomethings tours.

Day 2

## Ho Chi Minh City/Nha Trang

Discover the energy of Vietnam's biggest city on a CEO-led orientation walk and continue exploring with free time. Overnight train to Nha Trang.

During January/February, Tết (the Vietnamese Lunar New Year) sees millions of Vietnamese commute to be with their families and celebrate. While this is a fascinating time to travel through Vietnam, availability of transport may mean that we will replace the overnight train with an overnight bus.



### Meals included

Breakfast



### Today's Activities

Free Time

Ho Chi Minh City

Use your free time as you want in vibrant Ho Chi Minh City. Shop 'til your heart's content, immerse yourself in local culture, or just wander the streets to take in the city's unique vibe.

Orientation With CEO

30m-1h

Enjoy a brief walk with your CEO. He/she will give you some tips on finding things like supermarkets, main squares, and ATMs. For more specific or in-depth information, an official guided tour is recommended.

Basic Overnight Train (beds)

Ho Chi Minh City - Nha Trang

10h-11h

Experience overnight travel like a local. Sit back and get some well-earned (and likely much-needed) rest en route to your next stop.



### Optional Activities - Day 2

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.

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.

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.

Cu Chi Tunnels Guided Tour

Củ Chi

25-27USD

Take a guided tour of the Cu Chi Tunnels, a complex network of tunnels that the Viet Cong lived in to protect themselves from opposing forces during the Vietnam War. Try crawling through some of the tunnels (if you're not claustrophobic). These tunnels stored ammunition, had underground hospitals, and served as a hidden base for attacking allied forces.

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.

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.

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.

Day 3

## Nha Trang

Arrive in Nha Trang in the morning with plenty of time to explore local shops and markets, relax on the beach or visit nearby historical sites.

This evening, go on a street food crawl with the group and CEO to get to know more about the delicious local specialties.

Optional activities in Nha Trang include a boat trip to nearby islands for some snorkelling or, perhaps, a fun-filled all-day beach party.

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### Today's Activities

Free Time

Nha Trang

Spend your free time in this scenic resort town any way you want – go for a spa treatment, cycle around the city or just kick back and relax on a white sand beach.

#### ACTIVITY

Bring your appetite and your wallet. The CEO will bring the group to the best spots to eat and teach everyone about the local street food. Yum!



## Optional Activities - Day 3

Snorkelling

Nha Trang

Book a snorkelling day trip near one of the local tropical islands. Grab a snorkel and explore Nha Trang Bay's underwater world.

Nha Trang Boat Tour and Snorkelling

Nha Trang

29USD

Board a boat in the morning at Nha Trang's harbour for hours of fun. Begin with a visit to an island fishing village to take in daily life by foot, then take a ride in a basket boat. Afterwards, go for a swim or snorkel. Relax on the beach before heading back to Nha Trang.

Mud Bath Visit

Nha Trang

20USD

Take a relaxing dip in the therapeutic mud baths of Nha Trang. Thought to possess healing properties, the mud baths are the perfect place to unwind.

Day 4

## Nha Trang/Da Nang

Free time in Nha Trang. Overnight train to Hoi An.

In the evening, take an overnight train to Da Nang, then transfer to Hoi An.

During January/February, Tết (the Vietnamese Lunar New Year) sees millions of Vietnamese commute to be with their families and celebrate. While this is a fascinating time to travel through Vietnam, availability of transport may mean that we will replace the overnight train with an overnight bus.



### Meals included

Breakfast



### Today's Activities

Free Time

Nha Trang

Spend your free time in this seaside resort town any way you want – go for a spa treatment, cycle around the city or just kick back on a white sand beach.

Basic Overnight Train (beds)

Nha Trang – Da Nang

9h-10h

Experience overnight travel like a local. Sit back and get some well-earned (and likely much-needed) rest en route to your next stop.



### Optional Activities - Day 4

Snorkelling

Nha Trang

Book a snorkelling day trip near one of the local tropical islands. Grab a snorkel and explore Nha Trang Bay's underwater world.

Nha Trang Boat Tour and Snorkelling

Nha Trang

29USD

Board a boat in the morning at Nha Trang's harbour for hours of fun. Begin with a visit to an island fishing village to take in daily life by foot, then take a ride in a basket boat. Afterwards, go for a swim or snorkel. Relax on the beach before heading back to Nha Trang.

Day 5

## Da Nang/Hoi An

Get your bearings with an orientation walk before free time in the afternoon. Opt to take a cooking class, cycle to the beach, visit a tailor, or explore the old town.

From Danang, it is only a short drive to the picturesque port town of Hoi An. Once known as Faifo, it was an important trading town with strong south Chinese influence and connections.

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### Today's Activities

Private Vehicle

Da Nang - Hoi An

45m-1h

28km

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

Hoi An Orientation Walk

Hoi An

Join your CEO on a stroll through the winding streets of Hoi An's Old Town and spot Chinese assembly halls, historic homes, and well-preserved pagodas along the way. (Entrance fee to Hoi An's Old Town is not included)

Free Time

Hoi An

Get out and explore this beautiful city.

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### Optional Activities - Day 5

Tailor Shops

Hoi An

Go home with some new (handmade!) clothes from one of Hoi An's famous tailor shops. Walk the streets lined with hundreds of local shops that turn out gorgeous suits, dresses, winter coats, shoes, purses - almost anything - in a day's time to create next season's wardrobe.

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.

Day 6

## Hoi An

Enjoy a noodle-making demonstration and local lunch at the G Adventures-supported Oodles of Noodles Project. Later, opt to take a cooking class, cycle to the beach, visit a tailor, or explore the old town with free time.



### 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 6

Hoi An Old Town Walking Tour

Hoi An

6USD

2h-3h

Stroll through the narrow winding streets of Hoi An's old town to see Chinese assembly halls, ancestral homes, The Japanese Covered Bridge, and well-preserved pagodas on this self-guided tour. Opt to try local delicacies and fusion food at one of the restaurants for which Hoi An is becoming famous.

Tailor Shops

Hoi An

Go home with some new (handmade!) clothes from one of Hoi An's famous tailor shops. Walk the streets lined with hundreds of local shops that turn out gorgeous suits, dresses, winter coats, shoes, purses – almost anything – in a day's time to create next season's wardrobe.

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 Bike and Boat Tour

Hoi An

Enjoy a peaceful exploration of the villages around Hoi An, cycling through rice paddies and along narrow country lanes. Take advantage of this tour – it includes a boat trip through the water palm forest and a visit to the farming village of Tra Que.

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.

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.

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 7

## Hoi An/Huế

Continue the journey north to the city of Hue. Opt to visit the Royal Citadel and tombs, or take a cruise along the Perfume River.

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



### Meals included

Breakfast



### Today's Activities

Private Vehicle

Hoi An - Huế

4h

137km

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

Free Time

Huế

Enjoy your free time in Hue any way you want. Shop, eat, wander or relax - whatever suits your fancy.



### Optional Activities - Day 7

Imperial Citadel Tour

Huế

7USD

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.

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.

Perfume River Cruise

Huế

10USD

Enjoy this scenic evening cruise down the Perfume River. Shoot some memorable photographs and, perhaps, enjoy a nice cool breeze off the water.

Royal Tombs Entry

Huế

5USD

Visit the Royal Tombs along the Perfume River in Hue. Embracing the concept of Feng Shui, these tombs are extremely ornate and provide fantastic insight into the lives of the former rulers.

Cycling

Huế

10USD

Take to two wheels to see a true highlight of Hue - the countryside. See rural Vietnam, its villages, and cottage industries too.

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 8

## Huế/Hanoi

Free time in Hue. Overnight train to Hanoi.

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### Meals included

Breakfast

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### Today's Activities

Free Time

Huế

Enjoy your free time in Hue any way you want. Shop, eat, wander or rest - whatever suits your fancy.

Basic Overnight Train (beds)

Huế - Hanoi

14h-15h

673km

Experience overnight travel like a local. Sit back and get some well-earned (and likely much-needed) rest en route to your next stop.

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### Optional Activities - Day 8

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 (savory 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.

Cycling

Huế

10USD

Take to two wheels to see a true highlight of Hue - the countryside. See rural Vietnam, its villages, and cottage industries too.

Perfume River Cruise

Huế

10USD

Enjoy this scenic evening cruise down the Perfume River. Shoot some memorable photographs and, perhaps, enjoy a nice cool breeze off the water.

Imperial Citadel Tour

Huế

7USD

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.

Day 9

## Hanoi/Ha Long

Visit Halong Bay for a seafood lunch cruise and cave visit.

Arrive early morning to bustling Hanoi, the capital of Vietnam. Transfer to a private bus and head to the beautiful and famous Halong Bay.

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### Meals included

Lunch

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### Today's Activities

Private Vehicle

Hanoi - Ha Long

4h

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

Ha Long Bay Junk Boat Trip

Ha Long Bay

Come aboard a sailing junk to cruise past thousands of limestone islands and karsts that rise from the waters of Halong Bay. See the intricate caves and beauty of the islands up close. Enjoy a seafood lunch and a visit to one of the island's caves before transferring to the mainland for our overnight stay.

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.

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### Optional Activities - Day 9

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 10

## Ha Long/Hanoi

Relax and enjoy the scenery on the ride to Hanoi. Get to know the big city with an orientation walk through the Old Quarter. Opt to see Ho Chi Minh's Mausoleum, the Temple of Literature, and the Hoa Lo Prison, or shop in the Old Quarter.



### Meals included

Breakfast



### Today's Activities

Private Vehicle

Ha Long Bay - Hanoi

4h

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

Old Quarter Orientation Walk

Hanoi

Take an orientation walk through Hanoi's Old Quarter, a maze of streets, each one traditionally devoted to a different product or industry. Each street is named after the trade practiced on that street for several generations; it's an interesting glimpse into the life of a Hanoian in one of the oldest parts of town. Need a rest? Stop at Bia Hoi corner and pull up a plastic stool. Drink the local brew with the locals and make new friends.

Free Time

Hanoi

Enjoy free time in the afternoon to wander through the city.



### Optional Activities - Day 10

Hoan Kiem Lake Walk

Hanoi

Take a break from city strolling and wander down by Hoan Kiem Lake. Walk along the water's vibrant shoreline for some prime people watching. See if you can spot one of the famous 100-year-old turtles, which may still live in the popular lake.

Ho Chi Minh House on Stilts and Presidential Palace

Hanoi

2USD

1h-2h

Tour the Presidential Palace grounds and learn more about Vietnam's former president Ho Chi Minh. After refusing to live in such opulent accommodations, he built a traditional Vietnamese stilt-house and garden on the grounds next to the palace.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

Tran Quoc Pagoda Visit

Hanoi

Visit one of the oldest pagodas in Vietnam located on the eastern shore of Tay Ho. Learn about Tran Quoc's history from the 17th-century stela found on site. View it later in the day, if you can – the tall structure is striking against the setting sun.

Thăng Long Water Puppet Theatre Performance

Hanoi

200000VND

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

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.

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.

Day 11

## Hanoi

Spend time exploring Hanoi.

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### Today's Activities

Free Time

Hanoi

Get out and explore Hanoi.

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### Optional Activities - Day 11

Tran Quoc Pagoda Visit

Hanoi

Visit one of the oldest pagodas in Vietnam located on the eastern shore of Tay Ho. Learn about Tran Quoc's history from the 17th-century stela found on site. View it later in the day, if you can – the tall structure is striking against the setting sun.

Hoan Kiem Lake Walk

Hanoi

Take a break from city strolling and wander down by Hoan Kiem Lake. Walk along the water's vibrant shoreline for some prime people watching. See if you can spot one of the famous 100-year-old turtles, which may still live in the popular lake.

Optional Welcome Meeting for Travellers on Combos

You may be a seasoned pro at group travel by now, but there will likely be some new travellers joining the group. Sit in on the welcome meeting to meet the newest members of your group and learn about the next leg of your tour.

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.

Temple of Literature (Văn Miếu) Visit

Hanoi

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

Thăng Long Water Puppet Theatre Performance

Hanoi

200000VND

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

Day 12

## Hanoi/Vientiane

A short flight brings the group to the capital city of Laos. Opt to visit temples, see the golden stupa of That Luang, or scour the markets.

Explore a bit of Hanoi in the morning before an afternoon flight to Vientiane, the capital of Laos. There is a wealth of cultural delights to discover - on foot, by bicycle or, for the less energetic, by tuk-tuk.

Visit Laos' most important national monument, Phat That Luang, or meander down the dusty riverside tracks to find villages full of friendly children, dogs and chickens. A visit to Vientiane's vibrant, colourful morning market (which incidentally is open all day!) is worthwhile, to find plenty of local treasures. A great way to round off the day is to enjoy a spectacular sunset over the Mekong.



### Meals included

Breakfast



### Today's Activities

Free Time

Hanoi

Explore Hanoi on foot, by bicycle or by tuk-tuk.

Plane

Noi Bai International Airport - Wattay International Airport

1h15m

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

Free Time

Vientiane

Set out and explore the capital of Laos.



### Optional Activities - Day 12

Wat Pha That Luang Visit

Vientiane

1USD

See Laos' national symbol and most important sacred monument, Pha That Luang (Great Stupa), completely covered in gold leaf. Every November, devoted Buddhists come here to celebrate Vientiane's most important festival, Bun That Luang, with parades, music, and religious ceremonies.

National Museum Visit

Vientiane

4USD

Learn about the history, culture, and people of Laos at the National Museum, including the story of the Pathet Lao. See exhibits containing ancient items ranging from dinosaur bones to early Khmer sculptures.

Wat Sisaket Visit

Vientiane

1USD

Visit one of Vientiane's oldest and most fascinating temples featuring a cloister wall filled with thousands of Buddha images.

Buddha Park

Vientiane

1USD

Travel approximately half an hour from the city to visit Vientiane's famous Buddha Park, or Xieng Khuan as it is otherwise known. Marvel at the scale and detail of the hundreds of religious statues that inhabit the park, including a 40 metre high statue of Buddha. Please note that transportation to Buddha Park will cost an additional \$50.

Day 13

## Vientiane/Vang Vieng

Enjoy the beautiful limestone karsts surrounding Vang Vieng. Free time to hike, bike, swim or go caving.

A picturesque drive north takes us to beautiful Vang Vieng. This quiet town is set along the Nam Song river amidst rice fields and limestone karsts.



### Meals included

Breakfast



### Today's Activities

Private Vehicle

Vientiane – Vang Vieng

3h-4h

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

Free Time

Vang Vieng

Set off and explore the beautiful Vang Vieng area, or relax to your heart's content.



### Optional Activities - Day 13

Bike Rental

Vang Vieng

4USD

Rent a bike and explore the countryside.

Caving

Vang Vieng

Explore some of the many caves in the area. Some have lagoons for tubing in the dark or smooth terrain perfect for walking through. Ask your CEO for recommendations on which cave to visit for the best time.

Hiking

Vang Vieng

Set off along the banks of the river to explore nearby caves, countryside and meet local villagers to find out more about their way of life.

Swimming

Vang Vieng

Head to the river for a dip. There are also tube rentals available in the area if you'd rather spend some time floating around.

Day 14

## Vang Vieng

Free time to explore Vang Vieng. Opt to explore some of the caves by bicycle or take an invigorating walk. In the evening, soak in the natural beauty of the countryside as the sun sets over the river.

Opt to pre-book the "Vang Vieng Adrenaline Bundle" on the checkout page ahead of time, to include this optional on your tour.

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### Meals included

Breakfast

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### Today's Activities

Free Time

Vang Vieng

Set off and explore the beautiful Vang Vieng area, or relax to your heart's content.

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### Optional Activities - Day 14

Bike Rental

Vang Vieng

4USD

Rent a bike and explore the countryside.

Hiking

Vang Vieng

Set off along the banks of the river to explore nearby caves, countryside and meet local villagers to find out more about their way of life.

Vang Vieng Adrenaline Bundle

Vang Vieng

Head North of Vang Vieng where you'll grab a kayak and depart downstream on the NamSong river. Passing greenery, mountain karst, and small rapids, you'll arrive at the Tham None cave. Adventure through the cave to the other side of the mountain where you will enjoy lunch before continuing on towards Vang Vieng. The last stop will be at the infamous Blue Lagoon; swim or hang out along the banks after an afternoon of adventure before heading back to the town.

Day 15

## Vang Vieng/Luang Prabang

This morning travel from Vang Vieng to Luang Prabang.

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### Meals included

Breakfast

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### Today's Activities

Private Vehicle

Vang Vieng - Luang Prabang

7h

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

Day 16

## Luang Prabang

Witness the giving of alms to the Buddhist monks and visit the night market. Opt to take a cooking class, visit temples or cool off at Kuang Si Waterfalls.

Traditional Laotian culture is to give daily alms to monks. Monks are only allowed to eat food which has been donated to them before noon. On one of your mornings here, you may decide to rise with the sun, and watch one of the most important religious ceremonies in Laos. This is simply an unforgettable Southeast Asian experience.



### Meals included

Breakfast



### Optional Activities - Day 16

Phousi Temple Visit

Luang Prabang

20000LAK

Climb more than 300 steps to the top of Mount Phou Si for a panoramic view of the sunset over Luang Prabang. Ornate Buddhist shrines dot the pathway up and the glistening seven-tiered golden pagoda of Wat Chom Si awaits at the summit.

Royal Palace Museum Visit

Luang Prabang

60000LAK

The ornate rooms of this royal palace-turned-museum house the country's crown jewels, many religious artifacts, and a 50kg (110 lb) Buddha, cast of gold, silver and bronze. Gifts from visiting heads of state are on display, as are the beautiful silk screens crafted by the Queen.

Wat Visoun Temples Visit

Luang Prabang

20000LAK

Originally built in 1513 and still operational, Wat Visoun is Luang Prabang's oldest temple. Over the years invaders stole many of its priceless Buddha images, but this temple still offers some unusual architecture like the domed lotus flower stupa, designed by a royal and affectionately called "The Watermelon Stupa."

Kuang Si Waterfalls Excursion

Kuang Si Falls - Luang Prabang

2.50USD

Journey to this magnificent tiered waterfall, where relaxing is highly recommended. Opt for a dip in the turquoise waters and explore multiple picture-perfect pools, framed by the jungle landscape.

Royal Ballet Theatre

Luang Prabang

15USD

Enjoy a traditional performance at the Royal Ballet Theatre and learn more about Laotian culture through the art of dance.

Cooking Class

Luang Prabang

35USD

Enjoy the sights and smells of fresh produce, local spices and exotic ingredients and learn the secrets of Laotian cuisine.

Wat Xieng Thong Visit

Luang Prabang

20000LAK

Once a royal temple where Kings were crowned, the importance of this 16th-century Buddhist temple as a religious monastery is not lost on visitors. Wat Xieng Thong stands resplendent among shrines, pavilions, chapels, towers and gardens, and its gilded wooden doors, mosaics, and ceiling displays are representative of typical Laos art and craft.

Traditional Arts and Ethnology Centre Entry

Luang Prabang

35000LAK

Take an independent tour of the Traditional Arts and Ethnology Centre (TAEC) to learn about the traditional arts and cultures of Laos's many diverse ethnic groups. Shop in the TAEC Boutique for authentic village-made handicrafts and relax with a drink at the museum café.

Ock Pop Tok Living Crafts Centre Visit

Luang Prabang

Free

Visit Ock Pop Tok "East Meets West" Living Crafts Centre on the banks of the Mekong River to learn from artisans about Laos handicrafts and the importance of woven textiles in Laos culture. Wander around the grounds for free, for opt to enjoy a drink in the cafe, join a workshop, or take an audio tour.

Day 17

## Luang Prabang/Muang Pakbèng

Cruise the Mekong on a long houseboat before arriving at a village homestay for the night.

We board our boat for the two-day journey up the mighty Mekong River making our way to Chiang Khong.



### Meals included

Breakfast | Dinner



### Today's Activities

Mekong River Slow Boat

Luang Prabang – Muang Pakbèng

8h-10h

Enjoy the ride down the Mekong River on our private boat (it's pretty comfortable and spacious, and there's a toilet on board). Have some fruit, tea, and coffee (free of charge); water and soft drinks are available for purchase.

#### ACTIVITY

G Adventures and the Planeterra Foundation have worked with a community in the Mekong River to help develop their homestay programs, providing a unique cultural experience for travellers and the local community.

Here you have the chance to stay overnight in a Mekong village to get a glimpse into rural daily life. Enjoy dinner with your hosts. Experience a traditional Khamu Cultural Performance, and enjoy the chance to dance with the locals.

Day 18

## Muang Pakbèng/Chiang Khong

Mekong River travel day. Cross into Thailand.

This morning we re-board our boat and continue our leisurely cruise along the river before arriving at the Laos/Thai border and crossing to Chiang Khong in the late afternoon.

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### Meals included

Breakfast | Lunch

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### Today's Activities

Mekong River Slow Boat

Muang Pakbèng - Ban Houayxay

8h-10h

Enjoy the ride down the Mekong on our private boat (it's pretty comfortable and spacious, and there's a toilet on board). Have some fruit, tea, and coffee (free of charge); water and soft drinks are available for purchase.

Border Crossing (Laos - Thailand)

Ban Houayxay - Chiang Khong

Ready for a little more ink in your passport? Grab your bags and get ready to check another country off your bucket list.

Drive to Chiang Mai. Opt to visit Doi Suthep temple, catch a Thai boxing match or grab a bargain at the famous night market.

Departing Chiang Khong after breakfast, we drive to Chiang Mai where you have the afternoon free to explore this fascinating city, once the capital of the Kingdom of Lan.

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## Today's Activities

Private Vehicle

Chiang Khong - Chiang Mai

6h-7h

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

Free Time

Chiang Mai

Get out and explore this bustling city in northern Thailand.

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## Optional Activities - Day 19

Massage

Lay back and soothe aching muscles with a famous local massage. Affordable and amazing, don't miss out.

Muay Thai Fight

Chiang Mai

Watch a round of Muay Thai -- it's a sport unique to Thailand that's gaining popularity around the world. Muay Thai has many of the same principles as kickboxing. Learn more about this engrossing sport with a visit to a match -- don't worry, you're not expected to pick up your gloves and fight.

Doi Suthep Temple Visit

Doi Suthep - Chiang Mai

50THB

Visit Wat Phra That Doi Suthep, a golden Buddhist temple outside of Chiang Mai on the Mt Doi Suthep. Climb 300 steps to reach the temple and be rewarded with an unforgettable view. Admire the many Buddhist relics at this sacred temple and visit the white elephant shrine. Legend has it that the location of the temple was chosen after a white elephant carried a relic to the mountain and trumpeted three times before dying on the spot. Also, with a little luck, you may witness the chanting of the monks.

Street Food Walk at Chiang Mai Night Market

Chiang Mai

Pick up a a souvenir at this shopper's paradise. Wander through the market to find music, food, and local artists selling handmade crafts.

Day 20

## Chiang Mai

Depart at any time.

### What's included

- Your G for Good Moment: Oodles of Noodles, Hoi An
- Your G for Good Moment: Mekong River Homestay & Traditional Performance, Muang Pakbèng
- Your Welcome Moment: Meet Your CEO and Group
- Your First Night Out Moment: Connect With New Friends
- Your Discover Moment: Ho Chi Minh City
- Your Foodie Moment: Nha Trang Street Food Crawl, Nha Trang
- Your Discover Moment: Luang Prabang
- Halong Bay boat cruise with lunch
- Street food crawl (Hoi An)
- Orientation walk around Hanoi's Old Quarter
- Slow boat on the Mekong
- Temples of Luang Prabang
- Witness the giving of alms (Luang Prabang)
- Internal flight
- All transport between destinations and to/from included activities

## **What are the main highlights of this trip?**

Explore vibrant cities, shop in quaint Hoi An, float among the karsts of Halong Bay, explore Phong Nha's underground cave and river network, discover sleepy Laos, cruise the mighty Mekong River, learn how to make noodles at a G Adventures-supported enterprise, spend the night at a local village homestay, visit the stunning temples of Luang Prabang, Sample local fare on a street food crawl through Hanoi

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

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.

## **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?

## 1. COMBO TRIP

Please note that this trip is a combination of multiple G Adventures tours. As such, the staff and/or particular vehicles operating your tour may change between tour segments. You may also expect some group members to join or leave the tour, between tour segments. Also note that in some major cities in Vietnam, many hotel rooms do not have windows.

## 2. EXTRAS

Looking to add to your experience? Check out our Extras! Specially designed for travellers with unique interests, Extras are optional add-ons to your G Adventures trip that make your adventure more you-centric. Extras must be booked prior to departure, please see details in our optional activities field and ask your sales GCO or travel agent about booking.

## 3. BORDER CROSSING

Ban Houayxay, Laos to Chiang Khong, Thailand - Laos to Thailand

## 4. WEIGHT RESTRICTION

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 20kg (44lbs). Additional bags or excess weight charges may apply. These charges are the responsibility of the passengers.

## 5. PROOF OF EXITING VIETNAM

Important thing to note for our travellers arriving into Vietnam, and travelling onwards with G Adventures to neighbouring counties (i.e. Cambodia & Laos). When you are checking onto your international flight heading to Vietnam, you will often be asked by airline ticket counter personnel to provide a proof of exit from Vietnam.

In respect to this requirement, we encourage our travellers to print out a copy of their tour vouchers, along with a PDF copy of their Tour Details from the webpage. These references, along with entry and exit details on travellers Vietnam visa should be sufficient information.

# 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 do and see, 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?

Max 18, avg 12.

# What meals are included in this trip?

13 breakfasts, 3 lunches, 1 dinner

## **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?**

Local bus, air-con bus, train, walking, tuk tuk, local boat, junk boat, plane.

## **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?**

Simple hotels (twin-share) (5 nts), hostels (multi-share) (10 nts), sleeper trains (3 nts), homestay (1 nt).

## What kind of accommodation can I expect on this trip?

A variety of styles of hotels/guest houses are used on this trip. In many instances they might not be like what you are used to back home as service and efficiency can vary. In some areas we stay in simple local guest houses in stunning locations - rooms are small and simple and there may only be shared toilet facilities and showers.

Multi-share Accommodation: Multi-share same-sex accommodation is used on this tour, as such, if you are travelling with someone of a different gender you will not be in the same room. For private accommodation please see tours in our Classic Travel Style.

## 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 Tan Son Nhat Intl Airport in Ho Chi Minh City you can get a metered taxi from just outside of the arrival hall. The taxis are lined up outside in an orderly queue and the fare is roughly 100,000 Dong (approx 7 USD) to get to your starting point hotel. DO NOT GO WITH TAXI TOUTS AS THEY WILL TRY TO RIP YOU OFF. The airport is only 7km from the downtown District 1 so taking taxis is easy and cheap if the meter is on.

If you have paid in advance for an arrival transfer, a G Adventures representative will be at the airport to meet you. 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 leader, 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. If your trip involves overnights in homestays, villages or camping then you usually have the opportunity to rent sleeping bags if need be instead of bringing them with you.

# 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

**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](#)

**THAILAND** - Most nationalities do not need a visa for Thailand for stays of 30 days or less but if you do they are available on arrival at Bangkok Airport. If staying in Thailand for more than 30 days, you will be required to obtain a tourist visa in advance. Only 15 day tourist visas are issued when entering Thailand overland.

**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.

**LAOS** - Visas are issued upon arrival in Laos. You will need two passport size photographs and approx \$50. Tourists are generally admitted to Laos for 15 days with a visa on arrival or for 30 days with a visa issued at a Lao embassy. Please bring lots of visa photos with you.

## Where can I read detailed notes about this trip?

Border crossings

Chiang Khong. Laos to Thailand

## 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 currencies you will use are the Vietnamese Dong, Laos Kip and Thai Baht. 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 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?

## Ho Chi Minh City

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

## Củ Chi

- Cu Chi Tunnels Guided Tour (25-27USD per person)

## Nha Trang

- Snorkelling
- Nha Trang Boat Tour and Snorkelling (29USD per person)
- Mud Bath Visit (20USD per person)

## Hoi An

- Tailor Shops
- Cua Dai Beach
- Hoi An Old Town Walking Tour (6USD per person)
- Hoi An Bike and Boat Tour
- Thu Bon River Boat Trip (12USD per person)
- Hoi An Cooking Class (35USD per person)

## Mỹ Sơn

- Mỹ Sơn Excursion (38USD per person)

## Huế

- Imperial Citadel Tour (7USD per person)
- Thien Mu Pagoda Visit
- Perfume River Cruise (10USD per person)
- Royal Tombs Entry (5USD per person)
- Cycling (10USD per person)
- Hue Motorbike Tour
- Hue City Tour

## Hạ Long Bay

- Kayaking (10USD per person)

## Hanoi

- Hoan Kiem Lake Walk
- Ho Chi Minh House on Stilts and Presidential Palace (2USD per person)
- Vietnamese Women's Museum (1.50USD per person)
- Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum and Museum Visit (Free-1USD per person)
- Hanoi Foodie Culture Tour
- Army Museum (2USD per person)
- Hoa Lo Prison Entry (1.50USD per person)
- Temple of Literature Entry (2USD per person)
- Tran Quoc Pagoda Visit
- Thăng Long Water Puppet Theatre Performance (200000VND per person)
- Fine Arts Museum (2USD per person)
- Museum of Ethnology Visit (2USD per person)
- Optional Welcome Meeting for Travellers on Combos
- Temple of Literature (Văn Miếu) Visit

## Vientiane

- Wat Pha That Luang Visit (1USD per person)
- National Museum Visit (4USD per person)
- Wat Sisaket Visit (1USD per person)
- Buddha Park (1USD per person)

## Vang Vieng

- Bike Rental (4USD per person)
- Hiking
- Vang Vieng Adrenaline Bundle
- Caving
- Swimming

## Luang Prabang

- Phousi Temple Visit (20000LAK per person)
- Royal Ballet Theatre (15USD per person)
- Traditional Arts and Ethnology Centre Entry (35000LAK per person)
- Royal Palace Museum Visit (60000LAK per person)
- Cooking Class (35USD per person)
- Ock Pop Tok Living Crafts Centre Visit (Free)
- Wat Visoun Temples Visit (20000LAK per person)
- Wat Xieng Thong Visit (20000LAK per person)

## Kuang Si Falls

- Kuang Si Waterfalls Excursion (2.50USD per person)

## Chiang Khong

- Massage

## **Chiang Mai**

- Muay Thai Fight
- Street Food Walk at Chiang Mai Night Market

## **Doi Suthep**

- Doi Suthep Temple Visit (50THB per person)

## **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 leaders 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.

We do not recommend passengers to jump or dive into Kuang Sii Waterfalls in Luang Prabang, this may result in injury.

## 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.

## Are there any things I should be aware of?

As Vietnam embraces capitalism with open arms it is also falling victim to some of the problems of the West. Some parts of city centres are now a favourite hangout for pickpockets. If doing some exploring on your own carry only the necessary minimum with you and use a well-hidden money belt. Valuables, including your passport, should be left in the hotel safe - organize this at reception. There is no need to get paranoid, just be cautious.

## 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 or mosques or other holy sites. In Pakistan we recommend a head scarf for women while walking around.

## 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?

Minimum age of 18 years for this trip.

## 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.