

Vietnam boat and bike tour

Characteristics:

Operator: Velociped Fahrradreisen

Tourtype: guided

Children: yes

Regions:

Countries:

Benefits:

- 15 day trip/14 nights of which 5 overnight stays on comfortable ships in air conditioned double cabins and 9 overnight stays in very good hotels (at least 3 stars ranking)
- 14 x Breakfast
- 11 x Lunch
- 11 x Dinner
- 2 Domestic flights (see description)
- Guided bicycle tours, walks and kayak tours
- All city tours and entrance charges to National Parks, museums, etc.
- English and german speaking guides
- Rental bikes (the bikes vary from destination to destination)
- Airport transfers on official arrival and departure day

Additional costs:

- in a SR: 3.340,00 EUR
- tourer: on request



Tour description:

Vietnam is a country full of originality, overwhelming nature and mysterious monuments of times gone by. It is a country full of contrasts, with bustling, vibrant cities and rural districts where time seems to have stood still. Experience two weeks of Oriental flair and discover by bike and boat this fascinating country on the other side of the world. Explore the rocky fairytale world of the famous Ha Long Bay sailing on a traditional junk and get in close touch with this unique landscape by bike and kayak. Admire the lush green rice fields and meet the friendly water buffaloes, visit colorful temples and pagodas and let the emerald-green waters of the South China Sea and the incredible cave formations enchant you. Explore in Central Vietnam the impressive monuments of the Vietnamese emperors as well as the historical town of Hoi An - a World Heritage site - and in South Vietnam the expansive water labyrinth of the Mekong Deltas.



1. day Hanoi Arrival

Arrival at Hanoi Airport. A shuttle bus takes you to your hotel in the heart of the old quarter of Hanoi. Despite the three million inhabitants Hanoi offers a rural and traditional atmosphere. The historic old town district is considered as one of the best preserved in Southeast Asia. The colourful and bustling streets contribute to the Asian flair. We take a walk through the streets and in the afternoon we visit the famous water puppet theatre- a traditional Vietnamese form of art. Today we get to know our fellow travellers when joining the dinner together. Overnight we stay at the hotel.

2. day Hanoi - Halong City - Trà Ban Island 15 km

After breakfast our shuttle bus takes us past the vast rice fields into direction of Halong Bay. On the way you will take a break from driving and use the opportunity of a small cycling tour to stretch your legs. The tour will take you from Dong Trieu to the small village of Ben Trieu. Along the way it is possible that a local farmer will educate you first-hand about the cultivation of rice. An early lunch served by a local family brings the small cycle tour to an end and the bus takes you further to the city of Halong. Here you are welcomed on board the Junk and you depart on a longer crossing to a quiet bay in front of the Island of Tra Ban.

3. day Trà Ban Island 21 km and Quan Lan Island 29 km

After breakfast a transfer by tender takes you from the Junk to a small jetty on the island of Tra Ban. Narrow paths and expansive rice fields pass by as you cycle across this virtually tourist free island. A common sight are the Vietnamese water buffaloes grazing as you pass, you may even come into conversation with one of the local farmers tending to their fields. After a pleasant tour you will meet the ship once again for lunch and a small break. Your next destination, Quan Lan, lies only a few meters away from Tra Ban as the crow flies. On your second bike tour of the day you will discover the brilliant white sand Isle and the expanses of untouched sandy beaches for which Quan Lan is so well known for. This discovery is definitely made into an experience by taking a long relaxing swim before returning to the boat. That evening you leave behind the Bai Tu Long bay and cover the first miles across the sea in the direction of Halong Bay.

4. day Halong Bay - Kajak day

After breakfast we continue our cruise to the magic Halong Bay. After lunch we get an introduction into kayaking and spend the afternoon kayaking this craggy fairytale world. We paddle into Luon Cave. Through the beautiful gate, we'll see a round lagoon lake with flat surface and luxuriant vegetation in all four sites. The cliffs are high and dangerous with lot of monkeys running around and under peaceful water surface. Before dinner we visit so-called Amazing Cave on Bo Hon Island. It is one of the finest and widest grottoes of Halong Bay. Inside the grotto are thousands of stalactites and stalagmites along the 500-meter paved passage circle. We will spent the night on our comfortable junk.

5. day Ha Long Bay and Lan Ha Bay by Kajak

This morning you disembark the Junk with your baggage and take a transfer boat to Lan Ha bay. Here you will climb into kayaks and paddle to a magnificent beach where the midday meal awaits you. After lunch and a lengthy relaxing swim break in the emerald green waters, a small boat will pick you up from the beach and take you to the island of Cat Ba. Here a short transfer will take you to your hotel where you will have time in the afternoon to unpack, relax at the pool side or at the beach.

6. day Cát Bà Insel -Viet Hai village 15 km

Early in the morning a transfer will bring you to a small dock. A one hour crossing will bring you to yet another small jetty. From here you will start a cycling tour to a small tribal village of the Viet Hai minority. Parking the bikes here, a guided walk will take you through the protected old-growth forest where not only the untouched flora but also the large and colourful butterflies which inhabit it will leave you astounded. The aim is to reach the highest peak of the island which, on a good day, offers breath-taking views of the Ha Long bay and the rest of the island. After the walk a bike tour will take you back to the boat which will bring you to the comfort of the Sunrise Resort. Here the evening can be enjoyed on the hotel's very own sandy beach.

7. day Cát Bà Island -Hanoi 35 km

After breakfast you will depart the hotel for a further bike tour on Cat Ba. During the tour you will be able to experience the hustle and bustle of the local market life and a visit to the information centre at the national park will inform you further on the diverse flora and fauna of the region. After lunch at the hotel a taxi boat will take you to Haiphong where a bus awaits to take you to Hanoi. The evening will provide you with enough time to pleasantly enjoy a walk through the old town and to visit the sun down market.

8. day Hue 15 km

An early flight from Hanoi leaves you with the rest of the day to engross yourself in the old imperial city of Hue,

situated between rolling hills and rice fields along a bend in the Perfume River. The spiritual heart of Vietnam beats here, in more than 300 temples and pagodas. We visit this ancient imperial city by bike and foot to see the expansive citadel with the "Forbidden Purple City" which was once exclusively reserved for the Nguyen dynasty. Then we cycle along rice fields and through villages to reach the Thien Mu Pagoda which is part of one of the most influential monasteries in Vietnam. The day ends with a leisurely boat trip on the Perfume River. Overnight stay in a hotel at Hue.

9. day Hue - Hoi An

In the morning a transfer bus takes us to one of the famous Vietnamese Emperor's tombs. Afterwards we continue by bus to Hoi An. If weather conditions allow we stay at famous Lang Co Beach for a swim and for lunch. En route we make a brief stop at the Cloud Pass, the weather line between North and South Vietnam. Hoi An, once the most important port of Southeast Asia, has a delightful old centre inviting us to stroll around in the evening. Overnight at the hotel.

10. day Hoi An 17 km

Today we have the possibility to take a closer look into the daily life of the local farmers. In the morning we cycle to Tra Que - a small village in the suburban area of Hoi An. The name of the place originates from a sweet vegetable often used by the locals as a spice for their meals: a totally new and special kind of speciality! Our host prepares the meal together with us and explains this special ingredient. The afternoon can be designed individually: A stroll through the picturesque old town or a relaxing bathing afternoon at the white beach of Cua Dai.

11. day Ho Chi Minh City

In the morning we will be transferred to Da Nang and fly to Ho Chi Minh City, formerly Saigon. The city is the vibrant heart of the south. On a guided tour through the rapidly growing metropolis we visit the town hall, the Notre Dame Cathedral, the Reunification Palace and the War Remnants Museum commemorating the Vietnam War. Overnight at the hotel.

12. day Ho Chi Minh City - Mekong Delta 20 km

After breakfast the transfer takes us to My Tho where we will check in on a boat which takes us to Cai Be. During the short trip we cruise along the Mekong and can enjoy the ample growing nature of the delta as well as the river related life of the inhabitants. By boat we move on north to Ben Tre. Here we have a relaxing cycle tour including some kilometers only. Back on board lunch is served. In the afternoon the schedule includes the discovery of the green island Ngu Hiep and we have the opportunity to try exotic fruits while being astonished by different local handcrafts.

13. day Mekong Delta: Cái Bè - Islands of Vinh Long and Traon 30 km

In the morning we cross over to Vinh Long Island and under palm-shaded paths we cycle around the island. We continue by boat to Traon Island where we have once more the opportunity to explore the surroundings by bike. Later on we can enjoy the excellent cuisine on board and the wonderful evening atmosphere in the water labyrinth of the Mekong Delta.

14. day Can Tho - Ho Chi Minh City

During breakfast the ship takes us to Can Tho, where we will be transferred to a small boat taking us to Cai Rong, the most famous floating market of the Delta. Make sure to have your camera ready before getting caught up in the unique atmosphere of the merchants on their gaily painted boats. The following cruise through the small tributaries of the Delta completes our visit in the south. After lunch on board of the Conchinchine we check out and are transferred back to Ho Chi Minh City. Departure is possible from 8 pm on.

15. day Ho Chi Minh City Departure or prolongation

Departure after breakfast or prolongation in Ho Chi Minh City or Siem Reap.

Please note:

On account of unpredictable wind and weather conditions as well as organisational requirements we reserve the right to change routes.

Requirements:

We have rated the physical demands of the cycling as grade 1 - 2. This is based mainly on the topography which compared to our Mediterranean tours is rather less demanding. The hilliest stretches are on Tra Ban and the cycle tours on Cat Ba. All other tours are without appreciable inclines. The difficulty of cycling in Vietnam



lies mainly in the climatic conditions. However, by taking your time, using sufficient sun protection and drinking enough water you can easily adjust to this condition. After a rainfall some routes, especially on the first cycle trip, are difficult to cycle. An alternative route may have to be used.

Visa Requirements:

In order to enter Vietnam, foreigners need a passport valid for at least 6 months and a valid visa to be obtained from the Vietnamese embassy. The following documents must be submitted either in person or by mail:

passport (original document, not a copy!)

completed application form

current passport photograph (1.5 x 2.3 inch/ 4 x 6 cm)

visa fee as a non-negotiable check or in cash

a sufficiently prepaid envelope for registered mail.

Please take into account that the processing takes ca. 2 weeks. Please contact the Vietnamese embassy or foreign office in your home country for exact information.

For Cambodia the Visa can be issued during entry for 20 USD and 2 more passport pictures.

How to get to Vietnam - Flights:

It is recommended that you book your flight through your travel agent.

Please note that you have to book your outward flight to Hanoi and the return flight from Ho Chi Minh City.

If at all possible, the outward flight should land before noon on the arrival day. The return flight should in no case take off before 8 pm, because of late tour ending (6 pm).

The earlier a flight is booked the better the chances to find a reasonably priced ticket.

Please let your travel agent inform you what is best in your specific case. Should you book the additional days in Siem Reap you may book the flight from Ho Chi Minh City to Siem Reap with Islandhopping- and may fly home directly from Siem Reap. Should you need a return flight from Siem Reap to Ho Chi Minh City Islandhopping would be pleased to help you with this as well. Please check the arrival time in Ho Chi Minh City before booking the connecting flight to your onward destination. Vietnam Airlines often offers cheap fares for connecting flights - in this case it would be profitable to book the whole package; considering an early flight to Siem Reap.

Journey and Arrival:

A trip to Vietnam and a holiday spent there requires a certain amount of preparation in regard to formalities. In order to avoid time pressure while going through the formalities, you should have booked your trip to Vietnam at least two months before commencement of the tour.

Children:

We believe that only children in a good physical condition and of a minimum age of 10 and with previous cycle tour experience are able to master the cycle-tours on their own strength. Please note that the minimum height for a rental bike is 1.50 m (5 ft.)

Helmet Use:

Helmet Use is mandatory on all cycle tours. You are strongly encouraged to bring your own (well-fitted) helmet.

Catering:

Catering as specified in the itinerary.

Hotels:

In Hanoi, on Cát Bay Island, in Hue and Hoi An (Central Vietnam) and in Ho Chi Minh City you spend the night in very good 3 - 4 star hotels.

Junk LE COCHINCHINE Mekong-Delta:

In the Mekong Delta you sail on the "Cochinchine", one of the largest and most modern ships in the region. Its shape is reminiscent of the traveling barques of the famous river delta in southern Vietnam. The journey of the 27 m long and 6.5 m wide, comfortable wooden boat is protected by the watchful dark eyes on red ground painted on the prow. Three times a day the generously proportioned saloon turns into a dining room with beautifully set tables. The ship has 10 completely wood-paneled double cabins with double or two single beds. Each cabin has a tiled bath with shower and WC. There is, of course, also a large sundeck with padded deckchairs - probably the best place to experience first hand the lively activities in the many tributaries of the Mekong Delta.



Accommodation on the Vietnamese Junks:

It is easy to feel at home on the junks: The saloon with its upholstered wicker furniture and colorful carpets feels like a living room. For each meal the tables are lovingly set and the folded cloth napkins are a piece of art. The crew - in their brilliant white uniforms- greet you warmly with a welcome drink because hospitality is rated very highly in Vietnam.

The boats have 5 - 9 guest cabins furnished in Far Eastern Style to give off the right Asian flair. All cabins have individually regulated air conditioning. The cabins are located between decks, with doors opening to the outside. The large cabin windows guarantee a good view at all times. Each cabin has its own tiled bathroom with shower and WC. On the large sundeck you can avail yourself of deckchairs with comfortable padded matting. Here you can relax while the boat cruises through the fascinating island world and Vietnam's red flag with the yellow star flutters above your head.

Inoculations:

There are no absolutely required inoculations for Vietnam.

The institutes for tropical diseases, however, recommend a vaccination against hepatitis A and under certain circumstances also against typhoid. Since some of these inoculations have to be repeated, you should plan these in plenty of time.

A sufficient tetanus protection as well as an inoculation against polio and diphtheria (single vaccination, so-called three-way combination) should also be guaranteed.

A prophylactic malaria treatment is not absolutely necessary.

We recommend that you see your family doctor or a doctor for tropical diseases at least two months before the trip in order to get the necessary advice.

<https://www.boat-and-bike.com/tour/vietnam-boat-and-bike-tour.html>