



RAINBOW TRAVEL GROUP

Suite 207, 3112 11th Street NE • Calgary AB, Canada T2E 7J1 • Tel: (403) 210 1997 • Fax: (403) 210 1346
Toll Free: 1-888-456-5482 • E-mail: info@rainboweducationaltours.com

Vietnam
March 25 – April 03 or April 22 – 01 May

Day 1 Depart Calgary or Edmonton in the evening to Vancouver to catch your 1 AM flight to Vietnam

Day 2 Hanoi

Arrival in Hanoi at 1035am - Transfer - Sightseeing in Hanoi

Head to HOAN KIEM LAKE and Ngoc Son Temple, located in heart of Hanoi, which contains an islet with the tiny TORTOISE PAGODA. From there, walking to explore the OLD QUARTER. This fascinating network of narrow alleys and shophouses is also known as The 36 Streets, each street being named after the merchandise traditionally sold there, ranging from fabrics to crafts to medicines to tombstones. A handicraft lover paradise and an endlessly interesting place to explore local life. Afterwards, visit the MUSEUM OF ETHNOLOGY (closed on Monday & Vietnamese New Year), which brings to life the astonishing ethnic diversity in Vietnam, with art and artifacts from the 54 different ethnic groups that inhabit the country. Inside the museum are detailed descriptions of minority groups, with examples of their traditional clothing and way of life. Outside are faithful reconstructions of traditional longhouses, cemeteries and other distinctive ethnic buildings.

Overnight in Hanoi

Day 3 Hanoi - Halong (Breakfast / Lunch: Seafood Lunch on Boat Trip)

By vehicle from Hanoi to Halong Bay - Excursion by boat through Halong Bay including lunch (4 hours)

Cruise on a traditional wooden boat among the emerald waters and craggy limestone cliffs of Halong Bay, stopping to explore one of the many caves in this area. Sail past picturesque islands, floating villages, fishermen casting their nets and pearl fisheries and observe the rhythms of daily life on the bay. Return to Halong pier.

Overnight in Halong

Day 4 Halong - Hanoi - Hue (Breakfast)

By vehicle from Halong to Noi Bai Airport - Flight from Hanoi to Hue. - Transfer - Sightseeing in Hue

Hue served as the capital of Vietnam for more than 140 years. It houses ancient temples, imperial buildings and French-style edifices. It was established in the 17th century.

Visit the Imperial Tombs of Tu Duc and Khai Dinh

Venture into the countryside around Hue to the IMPERIAL TOMB OF TU DUC. Tu Duc, the longest reigning Vietnamese emperor, designed and built this elegant tomb during his lifetime, using it as a retreat for meditation, reading and theater performances. Take some time to soak in the tranquil atmosphere, wandering among the gracefully proportioned pavilions, courtyards and lotus ponds. Afterwards visit the IMPERIAL TOMB OF KHAI DINH, dramatically located on a hillside. The last of the monumental tombs of the Nguyen dynasty, completed in 1931, this tomb incorporates distinct European elements into the traditional Vietnamese architecture.

Overnight in Hue

Day 5 Hue - Danang - Hoi An (Breakfast)

Excursion to Thien Mu Pagoda with a boat trip on the Huong Giang river

Embark on a local boat and cruise down the PERFUME RIVER to the iconic THIEN MU PAGODA, an elegant seven-tiered octagonal tower which has become Hue's most widely recognizable monument. During the early 1960s, this became a center of anti-government protest, and the site of the famous self-immolation of the monk Thich Quang Duc.

Visit the Old Imperial City

Located in the heart of Hue is the IMPERIAL CITADEL, a vast complex built in the early 19th century and modelled after the Forbidden City of Peking. The original walls stretched for 10 km and were surrounded by a wide moat. Today, most of the buildings have been destroyed due to bombing during the Vietnam-American War, but the monuments that remain provide a fascinating glimpse into the court life of the Nguyen Dynasty. Approach the city past the striking FLAG TOWER, where a giant Vietnamese flag waves proudly overhead, to the imposing NGO MON GATE, the main entrance to the Imperial Enclosure. Enter into an area of spacious courtyards and serene lotus ponds, and visit DIEN THO Residence (Dien Tho palace) is where the Queen mother lived, visit THAI HOA PALACE,

the magnificently decorated reception hall, the HALLS OF THE MANDARINS, and the original NINE DYNASTIC URNS, among other sites.

By vehicle from Hue to Hoi An journey from Hue over scenic mountainous roads with spectacular views over the coastline. Halfway between Danang and Hue lies the dramatic HAI VAN PASS, the high dividing line between the climate zones of north and south Vietnam. Continue southwards passing LANG CO, a lovely stretch of beach curving outwards between a clear blue lagoon and the South China Sea, and the large coastal city of DANANG before arriving in Hoi An.

Visit Cham Museum

CHAM MUSEUM: this houses probably the best collection of Cham art to be found anywhere in the world. There are more than 300 artifacts in the museum, many dating to the 4th century. There are beautiful sculptures reflecting the 1000 year Cham period.

Visit Marble Mountains

MARBLE MOUNTAINS: consist of 5 stone hillocks, once islands, made of marble. Each is said to represent one of the five elements of the universe. The largest and most famous, Thuy Son, has a number of natural caves in which Buddhist sanctuaries have been built over the centuries. When the Champas ruled this area, these same caves were used as Hindu shrines.

TAM THAN: located in Marble Mountain near Thuy Son.

Overnight in Hoi An

Day 6 Hoi An (Breakfast)

Sightseeing in Hoi An with a boat trip on the Thu Bon River

The exquisitely preserved merchant town of HOI AN was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1999. Its colorful shophouses and temples reflect a diverse heritage, dating back to the 16th and 17th century, when it was a major port for Western, Chinese and Japanese traders. Today it is a thriving center of traditional crafts and a shoppers paradise, best explored on foot.

Wander through the cobbled streets, past low tile-roofed buildings, the bustling central MARKET and the small HARBOUR where colorfully painted boats are moored. The walking tour will include visits to a PRIVATE HOUSE, where members of the same family have lived continuously for centuries in a traditional setting; to one of the FAMILY CHAPELS built by prominent merchant or official families as centers for ancestor worship; and to a typical CHINESE-STYLE PAGODA or ASSEMBLY HALL. Continue to SA HUYNH MUSEUM, located near the Japanese Covered Bridge, it contains exhibitions from the earliest period of Hoi An's history. Visit a handicraft workshop in Hoi An where local products are being made by the industry itself. Finally, continue to the famous JAPANESE COVERED BRIDGE PAGODA, first constructed in 1593 by the Japanese community of Hoi An to link the town with the Chinese quarters across the stream

In the afternoon, board a local boat and cruise down the THU BON RIVER, enjoying the unspoiled countryside and stopping to visit a POTTERY VILLAGE and a WOODCARVING VILLAGE before returning to Hoi An harbour.

Overnight in Hoi An

Day 7 Hoi An - Danang - Saigon (Breakfast)

By vehicle from Hoi An to Danang - Flight from Danang to Saigon. - Transfer - Sightseeing in Saigon

A vibrant metropolis, SAIGON teems with energy, activity and motion. Everywhere you look, you see the meeting of traditional and modern life. The emerging modern skyline stands cheek by jowl with colonial buildings and traditional temples. Outside on the streets, young professionals zip by on motorcycles, chatting on cellphones; inside the quiet temple courtyards, worshippers pray amidst clouds of incense.

Begin your tour into modern history with a tour of the REUNIFICATION PALACE. Formerly the Independence Palace of the South Vietnamese president, this 60s style building was famously stormed by tanks on April 30, 1975 signifying the fall of South Vietnam. It has been preserved in its original state, and the original tanks remain on display near the entrance gates. Continue to the harrowing WAR REMNANTS MUSEUM, which comprehensively documents the travails of the long Vietnam- American War. Inside are detailed photographic exhibitions; outside is a collection of tanks, planes and weapons. A powerful experience, this museum is guaranteed to provoke strong emotions.

Afterwards driving to the historic center to visit EMPEROR OF JADE PAGODA, one of Saigon's most interesting pagoda. Proceed to pay a quick visit to the neo-Romanesque NOTRE DAME CATHEDRAL and the CENTRAL POST OFFICE. Pass by the classic European-style landmarks such as the ornate CITY HALL (HOTEL DE VILLE), the old OPERA HOUSE (both may only be viewed from the outside).

Finally, end up at the central BEN THANH MARKET, where vendors display a vast array of goods and handicrafts, appealing to every taste.

Overnight in Saigon

Day 8 Saigon (Breakfast) * No local guide

All day at leisure to shop and shop Overnight in Saigon

Day 9 Saigon (Breakfast)

Return flight to Canada.

Included in the Cost

- **English-speaking guide.**
- **meals according to itinerary / Breakfast box in lieu of ABF when early morning flight.**
- **flight ticket(s) as mentioned in the itinerary.**
- **Flight from Hanoi to Hue.**
- **Flight from Danang to Saigon.**
- **international flight tickets with WS and CI**
- **Current fuel surcharges are included, however, these are subject to change prior to tour start date.**
- **boat ticket(s) according to itinerary.**
- **ground transportation in private A/C vehicle (complimentary cold towels and drinking water).**
- **sightseeing incl. admissions fees according to itinerary.**
- **accommodation in hotels as mentioned above or equivalent.**
- **domestic airport tax.**
- **international airport tax CAD220**

Not Included in the Cost

- **visa fees apply on arrival USD 25,**
- **drinks**
- **personal expenses**
- **meals not listed in the itinerary**

Price per person based on minimum of 6 travelers \$2699.00

Non refundable deposit of \$200.00 upon booking

First payment of \$1500.00 due October 31, 2010

Final payment of \$999.00 due January 31, 2011

RAINBOW TRAVEL GROUP

Phone: 403 210 1997

Toll Free: 1-888-456-5482

E-mail: Info@rainboweducationaltours.com