



local experience in Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, China  
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## 11 DAYS NORTHERN VIETNAM WITH LOCAL EXPERIENCES

### DRAFT ITINERARY

No	Itinerary	Flight
1	Arrival – Hanoi	To be advised
2	Hanoi full day city tour	
3	Hanoi – Hoa Binh Lake – Moc Chau	
4	Moc Chau – full day tour	
5	Moc Chau – Mai Chau	
6	Mai Chau - Pu Luong	
7	Pu Luong – Ninh Binh	
8	Ninh Binh – Eco tour – Cooking class	
9	Ninh Binh – Halong – Night on cruise	
10	Halong – Hanoi	
11	Hanoi – Departure	To be advised

### PROGRAM DETAIL

#### Day 01: Arrival – Hanoi.

*Meal provided: No meal.*

#### Welcome to Vietnam.

Upon arrival at Hanoi Airport, obtain your visa and clear Immigration and Customs. After collecting your baggage, exit the airport to meet outside a local driver and guide. Settle in and enjoy the rest of day at leisure. **Stay overnight in Hanoi**

#### Day 02: Hanoi full day city tour

*Meal provided: breakfast, local home dinner.*

Start a new day by visiting **Ho Chi Minh Complex**, an important place of pilgrimage. A traffic-free area of botanical gardens, monuments, memorials and pagodas, it's usually crowded with groups of all ages, from all over the nation, who has come to pay their respects. Within the complex you can visit **Ho Chi Minh's Mausoleum** (*Outside visiting as it's closed for annual maintenance*), **Ba Dinh Square**, **the Presidential Palace**, **Ho Chi Minh's Stilt House**, **Ho Chi Minh Museum**

Closed by, the famous **One Pillar Pagoda** which is built of wood on a single stone pillar 1.25 m in diameter. It is designed to resemble a lotus blossom, which is a Buddhist symbol of purity, since a lotus blossoms in a muddy pond.

After that, continue to visit the **Temple of Literature** (Vietnamese name is Quoc Tu Giam) – The Vietnam's first University, which was built in 1070 in honor of Confucius, his followers and Chu Van An, a moral figure in Vietnamese education.

In the afternoon, you are transferred to visit **Vietnam Museum of Ethnology**. Almost no foreign tourists to Hanoi refuse to visit the Vietnam Museum of Ethnology, where they can look into a vivid picture of the miniaturized Vietnamese ethnic community's life. **Take a cyclo in Hanoi Old Quarter** – 36 streets and guilds to discover the ancient feature of Hanoi and daily life. Stop to visit **Ngoc Son Temple** which is located at the northern end of Sword Lake (aka Hoan Kiem Lake). From the shore, walking on the Welcoming Morning Sunlight Bridge leads to the island.

Welcome to our home in Hanoi! Have you ever had any chance to join in Vietnamese family to have dinner with authentic Vietnamese food? If you have not done it before, this is the must thing to do before you leave Vietnam. This is not only about the good food & good time but also where we share and learn from each other's culture. We will join meal with the group & sharing all my family story as well as the Vietnamese culture. We are sure to provide the unique experience while they visit our family.

#### Overnight in Hanoi.

#### Day 03: Hanoi – Hoa Binh Lake – Moc Chau.

*Meal provided: breakfast, dinner.*

In the morning, get transfer by private van and guide to visit Moc Chau. On the way, stop to visit at **Hoa Binh Lake**.



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**Hoa Binh Lake** is located on Da River, 70 kilometers west of Hanoi. It is renowned as one of the largest artificial reservoirs in Vietnam. The lake is often referred to as "Ha Long Bay on mountain" thanks to its wild natural beauty. It has now become one of the most famous Hoa Binh attractions.

Take **boat trip** on Hoa Binh Lake to visit:

**Chua Thac Bo Temple:** Chua Thac Bo Temple has a system of 38 statues. The temple has a large statue located in a cave that is dry and cool all year round. Surrounding the cave are shimmering and magical stalactite columns in the dim electric light, creating the sacred and attractive appearance of the worship cave.

**Thac Bo Cave:** Thac Bo Cave has a cave with stalactites about 50 meters high and is a Buddhist worship area. The cave area is quite large and has cool air. Going deep into the cave, discovering the multi-shaped stalactites formed by the residue of dripping water over hundreds of thousands of years, one can see that Mother Nature's creativity is endless.

Back to the port. Then, heading to Moc Chau. Enjoy the beautiful along the road of tea plantation, corn fields and villages.

**Overnight in Moc Chau.**

#### **Day 04: Moc Chau – Full day tour**

*Meal provided: breakfast, dinner.*

You can get up early to enjoy the pure peaceful atmosphere and sunrise.

Have a breakfast, after that you will go to visit:

**Bach Long glass bridge** is like a "white dragon" lying across the mountainside, winding among the trees and clouds of the Northwest, both majestic and lyrical and poetic. The journey to conquer Bach Long Bridge is a trip with countless emotions, worthy of being the most attractive tourist destination in Moc Chau.

**Happy Land Moc Chau** with tea factories and the Heart-shaped tea hill.

**Dai Yem waterfall**, the "Dong Son Moc Huong" cave (Doi Cave) that is considered the most beautiful one in the North-West of Vietnam. The tour guide will tell you the interesting legend about the cave.

Next to Dau Yem Waterfall is beautiful **Vat Village**. **Vat village** has fences with flowers blooming in all four seasons, fields, green vegetable gardens, old stilt houses, Coming to Vat village, you will clearly see the life and culture of the people here, you will participate in activities of the people in the village such as **weaving and baking bamboo-tube rice**, and you will see local people performing their **traditional songs and cheraw dance** in their traditional costumes.

Back to your hotel and relax.

**Overnight in Moc Chau.**

#### **Day 05: Moc Chau – Mai Chau.**

*Meal provided: breakfast, dinner.*

In the morning, get transfer from Moc Chau to **Mai Chau**. Mai Chau - an idyllic valley home to many hill tribes including the Dzao, Muong and Thai.

On the way to Mai Chau, visit: **Hua Tat village**, a village located on the side of National Road #6, at the entrance of Moc Chau Plateau. Hua Tat is a small charming and quiet village of Blue H'mong people. The stilt houses scatter in the flat valley with garden of peach, plum and broccoli, chicken and pig... Visiting a local house, you can **see traditional handcrafted forge corn mill**. Even lying on the side of a national road, the village has electricity and chance to contact with modern life but people here still keep the old things like that. Besides that, in each family, they have traditional music tool, Khen and a mill to make traditional kind of cake.

When arrive in **Mai Chau**, you will visit the villages as **Lac, Poom Coong**... the resident of mostly Thai people. They still remain their traditional weaving work. Walking/cycling in about 2 hours.

**Overnight in Mai Chau.**

#### **Day 06: Mai Chau – Pu Luong**

*Meal provided: breakfast, dinner.*

In the morning, get transfer from Mai Chau to **Pu Luong**. Visit **Uoi, Lan village**.

This is a common and easy walk around the most beautiful valley of rice terraces in front of the Retreat. We start to descend into the beautiful valley facing the Retreat where you walk around tumbling rice terraces. Then we will walk through small paths shrouded in vegetation to slowly reveal a picturesque **Uoi village** sitting at the base of a towering mountain. Your camera will not be able to sit still when you see the panorama view of the village from above.



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Continue walk down hill to a local home, where you can take rest then take a cycle to go cycling around **Lan village**. If time permits, we will visit a local family where we can learn about their traditional brocade weaving (not guaranteed). Cycling through the rice paddies and another village to explore more the landscape surround.

### **Overnight in Pu Luong.**

#### **Day 07: Pu Luong – Ninh Binh**

*Meal provided: breakfast, dinner.*

After breakfast, take a short ride from the retreat to **Dong Dieng village**, Going down into the most beautiful valley in Puluong. Along the way you will have a chance to enjoy beautiful terrace rice fields and gorgeous mountains. Take a scenic trail winding to have a look of the landscape of rice field and the village, which were widen in your eyes. You will pass some homes on the way, you can come to visit any local family if you want, this is a great chance to learn more about life style and culture of the locals. It's time to get back the retreat.

In the afternoon, get transfer from **Pu Luong to Ninh Binh**.

When arrive in Ninh Binh, check in hotel.

### **Overnight in Ninh Binh.**

#### **Day 08: Ninh Binh eco tour – cooking class.**

*Meal provided: breakfast, dinner on cooking class.*

In the morning, visit **Trang An eco-tourism** attraction. You will be amazed by neglected area while having **boat trip** through cave chains: **Sang Cave, Toi Cave, Ba Giot Cave, Sinh Cave**...experiencing mysterious views of the so-called "Ha Long Bay in land".

In the afternoon, heading to **Buffalo Cave**:

Spanning across a sprawling area of 1 hectare, Buffalo Cave offers an exquisite blend of natural wonders, tranquility, and a touch of adventure. This enchanting location boasts a diverse range of attractions that allow visitors to immerse themselves in the essence of rural Vietnam. From rivers and fish ponds to rice fields, caves, waterfalls, and even an outdoor restaurant and bar, Buffalo Cave provides an all-encompassing experience that captures the heart and soul of the Vietnamese countryside.

01:30 PM: Begin your adventure as our local guide picks you up from your accommodation in Tam Coc.

02:00 PM – 02:30 PM: Engage in **buffalo bathing**, showering, and riding.

02:30 PM – 03:00 PM: Embark on an exciting **fishing experience with local fishermen**.

03:00 PM – 03:30 PM: Immerse yourself in the **art of rice planting** alongside Vietnamese farmers.

03:30 PM – 04:00 PM: Refresh yourself with a **waterfall bath** and explore the mystical Buffalo Cave.

04:00 PM – 05:00 PM: Participate in a **cooking class** and savor a delightful meal prepared by the skilled chefs of Buffalo Cave.

06:30 PM: Bid farewell to an extraordinary day filled with unforgettable moments.

### **Overnight in Ninh Binh.**

#### **Day 09: Ninh Binh – Ha Long Bay/ Lan Ha Bay – Night on cruise.**

*Meal provided: breakfast, lunch and dinner on cruise.*

After breakfast at the hotel, check out and transfer to Halong Bay/ Lan Ha Bay.

*Subject to change depending on confirmed cruise*

11:30 Arrive at private lounge in Tuan Chau Marina – Ha Long, enjoy welcome drink and express check-in before boarding.

12:15 Transferred by speed boat the Cruises. Welcome aboard the cruise, refresh with our welcome drink while Cruise Manager briefing cruise orientation, activities & on-board safety. The boat starts to cruising to Lan Ha bay.

13:00 Cruise leaves to explore Lan Ha Bay. You will be enjoying a meal that features the distinctive Vietnamese cuisine taste while relaxing and avoiding the crowds on well-traveled roads.

15:30 You will arrive at Light and Dark Cave – one of the best attractions on Lan Ha Bay which is best known for its pristine and tranquil beauty. Exploring the area by local boat or kayaking. After that, you can swim in the green emerald and cool water around the cruise.

17:30 Return to the cruise and enjoy the Bay sunset while enjoying the "Happy Hour" special. You may also join our chef in the kitchen to learn how to make traditional spring rolls.



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19:00 If the weather permits, enjoy dinner on the sundeck. You will have the chance to savor meals produced from premium, fresh ingredients in a distinctive fusion style that fuses the essence of traditional Vietnamese cuisine with the innovative influences of modern cuisine.

**Stay overnight on Cruise**

**Day 10: Lan Ha / Halong – Hanoi**

Meal provided: Breakfast, Brunch on cruise.

*Subject to change depending on confirmed cruise*

06:00 Greet the new day on the sundeck with a tachi session. Enjoy the fresh air on the bay while you unwind with a cup of tea or coffee.

06:45 Enjoy a quick breakfast on board and get your day going with plenty of energy.

07:30 You will join the tour of Cat Ba World Biosphere. It will take you around 30 minutes to transfer from Gia Luan to Trung Trang – one of the most impressive caves in Cat Ba Island, Vietnam.

09:30 Back to the main boat for relaxing and check out at the reception, please put all your luggage at the outside of your cabin, crew member will help to bring luggage on land.

09:45 Lunch is served in the restaurant while the boat heads back to the harbor.

11:00 Disembark from the cruise as our crew said farewell, back to Tuan Chau Marina by our speed boat. Back to Hanoi.

**Overnight in Hanoi.**

**Day 11: Hanoi – Departure.**

Meal provided: Breakfast.

Free time until your drop-off time at Hanoi airport for your flight back home by guide and driver. Have a safe and sound flight. We do look forward to seeing you again!

**End of service.**

Including	Excluding
+ 09 nights stay at hotels with breakfast based on a private double/twin/triple sharing room + 01 night on cruise based on a private double/twin/triple sharing room + Meals mentioned in the itinerary - good food at local restaurant or buffet meal + Entrance fees for all visits as mentioned in the program + Ninh Binh Private Boat + Cyclo in Hanoi + Travel by private, air-conditioned vehicle with an experienced, safe driver + Round trip cable car in Sapa/ Bana Hills + Motorbike trip in HoiAn + Private English speaking guide with legal license in each region + 02 bottle of mineral water/ pax/ day and souvenir + All taxes and service charge	- Bank fees for both sides (Prefer cash on arrival) - Vietnam evisa: 45 USD/pax for one time entry (Include 25 USD visa stamping fee) - Single room supplement - Early check in and late check out at all hotels - Personal expenses (laundry, telephone, shopping) - Tipping for guide, driver - Travel insurance - International or domestic air ticket and airport tax - Any additional expenses caused by reasons beyond our control such as natural calamities (typhoon, flood), flight delays, rescheduling or cancellations, any accidents, medical evacuations, riots, strikes etc... - Other services which are not mentioned clearly in the "Including" item



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